TOWARDS PEACE WITH JUSTICE

THE ROLE OF RELIGION TODAY

ANGELO FERNANDES

TOWARDS PEACE WITH JUSTICE

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First published 1981 by

Indian Social Institute
Lodi Road, New Delhi 110003

Printed at

Aruna Printing Press
B-78 Naraina Industrial Area
Phase II, New Delhi 110028

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INDIAN SOCIAL INSTITUTE
1981

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Introduction 1

1. Religion and Peace 6
2. Religion and the Quality of Life 21
3. Religion in the Struggle for World Community 35
4. The Role of Religion in a New International Economic Order 55
5. The Role of the Church in Development 67
6. The Problems of Population and Development: A Theological Perspective 101
7. Social Justice Priorities in Health Care 110
8. The Role of the Family in a Changing World 126
9. Meditation and Integral Humanism 137

Index 147

Acknowledgements

This book has come about thanks to my association with many organisations whose members have been reflecting together on the theme of 'Religion, Justice and Peace.' Several papers were delivered at the Assemblies of the World Conference of Religion for Peace to mixed audiences of all countries and all religions brought together with much effort. I am much indebted to the world body and to its Asian and Canadian Chapters.

The Christian Churches of Australia jointly initiating Action for World Development a decade ago gave me the opportunity to spell out the role of the Church in this field. The Medical Guilds of Wellington and Auckland in New Zealand provided the platform for the address on social justice priorities in health care. My thanks are also due to the Christian Family Movement and the Ecumenical Association of Ernakulam, India, for the paper on the family. That of theology and the problems of population and development was at the behest of the Federation of Catholic Universities of the World in 1975.

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge my indebtedness to Alfred de Souza, Director, Indian Social Institute, and those associated with him for so kindly undertaking the publication and preparing the manuscript for the press.

Angelo Fernandes

Archbishop of Delhi

New Delhi
March, 1981

Introduction

Maturing humanity is at the crossroads. The multiple crisis stemming from disenchantment with the development and disarmament decades, from environmental pollution and from the energy situation have administered a salutary shock to man who is himself in a state of crisis.

A new international economic order, still struggling to be born, offers a fresh opportunity for a new re-ordering of socio-econonic and political structures.

To be successful, the search for a new society should be seen and planned from the perspective and condition of the vast majority of mankind, the rural poor of the world.

Assisting the growth of the needy countries of the world unto "self-confidence" should bring freedom and joy to all the partners in the undertaking even while it provides the basis for a more just, orderly and peaceful world.

Peace is not just the absence of war or nuclear non-proliferation; it requires mutual confidence which frequently sanctions a covenant or a treaty among good neighbours. It is concord in a life of fraternity built on truth and freedom, on justice and love. It means working towards the well-being of daily existence for every human being, a wholeness and integrity that spells harmony with oneself, with others, with nature and with God. Peace is the imperative that includes all our desires and strivings for brotherhood and community at all levels.

These propositions indicate the gravity of the problems which the leaders of the nations and of United Nations have been grappling with ever since the Second World War. They are challenges that continue to stare us in the face.

ROLE OF RELIGION TODAY

The question might well be asked as to what all this has to do with religion. Have religious people addressed themselves to these burning issues? Especially in the light of history, does religion have a role to play in such matters?

Even if religion has, not infrequently, been a divisive force, even if today it is sometimes used for unworthy ends, isn't it still true that the need for a spiritual thrust in life is greater than ever? Isn't it beyond doubt that the struggle which convulses the world today is not between religion and science but between two competing trends, one assigning to science a messianic role in bringing about an earthly paradise, the other declaring that basic human values and prayerful union with God are more important to human destiny? Given the way countries operate today, are not spiritual and moral values in danger of being shipwrecked? Rightly understood and renewed in its presentation for the world of today, does not religion, its spirit and genuine experience provide the best and the strongest motivation for fuller and more wholesome human lives, for a greater moral consciousness in private and public life, for more devoted service to one's fellow-men, thereby strengthening the efforts for a more just and brotherly world? Isn't the understanding of peace as a journey together towards brotherhood and community a task worthy of the best efforts of all religions?

A MULTI-RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

It has been a recurring dream to bring together the religious leaders of the world for such an enterprise. Already in the 1930s such a meeting was planned with Mohandas Gandhi and Albert Einstein involved but the World War intervened. In the early 1960s several small inter-religious meetings did take place but a 'spiritual summit' involving such leaders as

Pope John XXIII, Albert Schweitzer, Martin Buber, Martin Luther King was not possible.

In January 1968, however, as the Gandhi Centenary Year was getting underway, an International Inter-Religious Symposium on Peace did take place in New Delhi. This led in turn to the World Conference on Religion for Peace held in Kyoto, Japan, in October 1970. This Assembly brought together over a thousand persons, including more than two hundred delegates representing ten world religions from thirty-nine nations. The final plenary session voted that "the work initiated at Kyoto shall be continued in the form of a new inter-religious world body". Officers and an Executive Committee were elected and an international office was established at 777 U.N. Plaza, New York, U.S.A.

Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary General of U.N. commenting on this event, wrote in 1974: "The real significance of Kyoto was that the Conference was held at all, and that the topics were not specifically those of religion but were the dominant problems which we confront and the application of religion to them." That states very well the kind of activity undertaken by the World Conference of Religion for Peace and its branches spread over many countries of the world.

The Kyoto Meeting, at which "Religion and Peace" the first address in this book was delivered, dealt largely with the issues of Human Rights, Development and Disarmament. These hardy perennials, likewise, figured on the agenda of the Second World Assembly at Louvain, Belgium, in 1974. The situation was studied as of then and a fourth concern was added, namely, 'Environment and Survival'. "Religion and the Quality of Life" was the overall theme of the Conference, and the subject likewise of the inaugural address. It is the second in this series.

Meanwhile, at the level of the United Nations, WCRP frequently gave testimony on human rights issues such as apartheid, torture, human massacre, religious intolerance and, supported by many notable memoranda, on the vexed question of disarmament. There was also the "Boat People" project which stimulated greater interest in securing a home for the refugees in some western countries. Currently there is the Bangkok Project for the Kampuchean refugees.

Between the general asesmblies, among other things inter-religious meetings were held at regional levels and sometimes between nations on their specific problems.

Because of the follow-up which has taken place, two such gatherings were particularly significant, namely, The First Asian Conference on Religion and Peace held at Singapore in 1976 and the Canadian one in Toronto in November 1975. The lectures given on both these occasions are included in this volume: one is on "A New International Economic Order" and the other, the concluding one, on "A Spirituality for Today's World". Meanwhile, the European Secretariate at Bonn and the network of inter-religious groups in the Continent are gaining ever more momentum.

The Third WCRP World Assembly which met in Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A. in September 1979, prophetically indicated the goal ahead to which mankind should be moving by the theme it chose for its deliberations: "Religion in the Struggle for World Community". The inaugural address, which finds a place in this book, is on the same topic.

The specific thrust of WCRP is explained in some detail in the above lecture. It does not include theological debate. Nevertheless, a paper on "Theology and the Problems of Population and Development" is included in this volume. It helps to emphasize another facet of peace work, namely, getting all religions to renew themselves to deal not only with individuals, micro-ethics and personal salvation, but to exercise their responsibility to society and its crucial problems. "Health Care" is one such important factor for true community development. Hence the inclusion of the address given to the Medical Guilds of Wellington and Auckland, New Zealand, in 1979.

Speaking in more general terms, the search for world development in consonance with justice, equity and human solidarity, involves a long-term educative process as well as a short-term strategy to bring about decisive action in favour of the needy regions of the world. This is the principal recurring item on the agenda of the 'dialogue' between developed and developing countries—the main human challenge of the century. How religiously concerned persons can assist the process in economically developed countries is a subject of a lengthy chapter in this book. The address was delivered at the

Ecumenical Conference on "Action for World Development" held in Sydney, Australia, in 1970.

If we cast a glance at the socio-political systems which obtain in the world of today, it would appear that there is undue preoccupation with the 'collectivity' in socialist-oriented societies and with the 'individual' in so-called consumerist societies, where capitalism or mixed economies flourish. In both cases, the interests of the family, the primary unit of society, seem to go by default. As a modest contribution towards the desired shift of emphasis in favour of this vital cell of society, the article on "the family" has been introduced. It was delivered to an audience in Ernakulam, South India, as far back as 1967, but, because of the fresh wave of interest in this subject, may not be out of place. Ultimately, building community must begin and be fostered in the home. That is the first step for better relationships for the entire family of man. The pursuit of "Meditation and Integral Humanism" must, therefore, also begin at the level of the family and from that privileged haven generate positive, just and loving relationships for all the wider fields of human endeavour.

1

Religion and Peace

The last quarter of a century has witnessed international co-operation on a scale unprecedented in the history of mankind. One need only recall the efforts made in the fields of education and literacy; communications and culture; food and agriculture; health and population; socio-economic development, commerce and industry; international law, politics, and even in the delicate sphere of peace-keeping. The record is an impressive one and men of religion cannot but see in it a sign of further hope for the world of tomorrow.

But this must not blind us to the fact that the promises contained in the charter have not been fulfilled. The frightening challenges are still very much with us in the form of mass poverty, hunger, disease, unemployment, literacy, and a host of associated by-products. At the same time, world efforts to curb greed and selfishness, to arouse awareness and concern for the needy have been tragically inadequate and, if anything, the introduction of the idea of Might into the world of party politics has brought about the use of brute force and rancour in civil and political life.

The inequalities and injustices between men and nations have increased; gross violations of human rights and fresh

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Delivered at the First World Conference of Religion for Peace at Kyoto, Japan, on 16th October 1970.

manifestations, of discrimination, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid continue to rear their ugly heads. By and large, there is a widespread sense of frustration and revolt and an alarming increase in the use of violence and its concomitants. Many are constrained to conclude that life in this fashion is meaningless, and they do not hesitate to act accordingly.

Ever since Hiroshima, mankind has lived under the shadow of the atom bomb and of other weapons of mass destruction. True peace seems further away than ever!

EXPO '70 with its central theme "Progress and Harmony for mankind" was a splendid ideal indeed but it seemed to equate progress with the scale of industrialization and to promise a golden age based on technology and human wisdom. And, as for harmony, nearly half the budget of the developed and developing countries is meanwhile being spent on armaments of one kind or another for waging war! Technology is good but it is powerless to make men righteous. Man's spiritual and moral maturity must grow proportionately to his technical skill and power. What EXPO '70 did serve to highlight are the tremendous possibilities open to the men of today's world for the betterment of human life. A paramount factor are the steadily increasing resources of the wealthier economics. This great asset is at the root of mankind's new freedom to choose between a great variety of alternatives—of greater or lesser importance—to make its own future—for good or evil. And thereby hangs a tale! For the snag is a human one and not technical! If the resources, know-how, personnel are matched by a deepened sense of basic values, a morality common to all men, in order to control and use beneficently the marvels of technology, there is hope for the future. It can be done if science and religion get together and work together in a harmonious relationship. As Lenin Peace prize winner J.D. Bernal says: "All scarcity, all need felt in the world is henceforth due to human interference, human stupidity, and human greed. The means are there, the knowledge is there; what is needed is the will to apply them."

RELIGION AND LIFE

The idea of religion working for world progress and peace

seems on the face of it futile, for religion, at least in its traditional sense, is losing its grip on the men of the age more especially the younger generation. What is worse is that the minds of millions today are being manipulated by state systems of education and social communication, dominated by the thinking of an industrial-military complex or caught in the vortex of poverty and want. And yet the disastrous division between Religion and Life can only worsen the present unhappy situation and lead to a still more crippling frustration. The alternative is to bring about the triumph of a spiritual regeneration.

Religion and Life are both elemental forces. They lay claim to the entire man and to all men and human institutions and this sets up a tension between them. The element they possess in common is that they both belong to human nature: true religion is also life and true life is also religion. When religion is cultivated in its finest sense as a relationship of man to a transcendental God and the submission of the entire man to him and when life is understood in all its vitality as the highest possible cultivation of human values and when both govern man and all human relations, the tension reaches its climax, with a consequent release of energy and the maximum amount of work and progress. This enjoins a two-fold task on all men of goodwill, not to allow the forces of tension which are related to each other to separate entirely and, secondly, to strive to create equilibrium out of tension—a tragic harmony produced through apparently discordant notes. The struggle is a source of joy and strength and the path to peace for man and mankind.

The unity of religion and life is not something which can be easily achieved; it must evolve in a dynamic, organic way. We must seek to create the conditions favourable to this process of evolution in all spheres of human activity, so that religion may contribute to the perfection of human nature and a noble humanity to the perfection of religion.

The proud achievements of our age, unless properly related to religion, lack their deepest meaning. Yoked together, they will be a beacon of light and an anchor of hope for the baffled men and women of our generation.

In practice, this may mean the recognition of human

conflicts beneath the apparent calm on the surface of many societies; mutual acceptance of others as human beings even when there is disagreement over the ways of justice and peace, and the realization that the establishment of peace through justice and love will always, humanly speaking, remain an unfinished symphony. We can only strive towards creating the human relationships which will in turn generate forms of mutual responsibility by which and through which men may live in creative tension and help each other to deal constructively with the world's conflicts. This is the violence of the peacemaker—at once creative and constructive.

And it is feasible. For much as religion may appear to be on the wane, it still commands the nominal allegiance of the great majority of mankind; it continues to be, in more refined form, the most hotly debated subject even in death-of-God societies; it occupies many columns in today's newspaper; it is implicit in the agonising search for identity which is basic to students' unrest movements the world over and is finding its way back into the very challenge of world development by the current emphasis on non-economic factors and on integral humanism as the goal of the entire process. It is likewise at the core of that helplessness of pleading mankind in the face of a nuclear holocaust.

And so this Conference on Religion and Peace is very timely indeed. It may have its limitations but it nevertheless imposes a serious responsibility in each and all of us to make the most of this golden opportunity for the forthright application of religious thinking to the burning issues of today as a humble service to makind.

THE CHALLENGE TO RELIGIONISTS

The first response of religionists to the quest for peace must be one of repentance before God. Both in the past and even today, if not religion as such, our religious institutions, have been party to those attitudes and have been caught in those structures which inflict suffering and deny man his true dignity. Too often has there been connivance or listlessness in the face of discrimination and racism, colonialism and exploitation, reflecting the inhumanity of the unconcerned rather than the

compassion of religion. Repeatedly we speak of freedom and tolerance, of love and justice, of peace and reconciliation, but our actions and our inertia belie our words.

By the same token, we must not be content with a hackneyed concept of tolerance. It would smack of the negative. It is respect and reverence for each other and for each other's religions in the fullness of courtesy that should provide a strong foundation for that fellowship and partnership, which I hope will be one of the most marked features of this movement. It is not the name but the spirit of religion that we must bring to bear on our dealings, one with another, on our deliberations and conclusions, our hopes and our plans for the future.

In this connection, I would like to issue a call for the spirit of fearlessness. Some nations in the past may have used religion as a tool for their unpeaceful purposes. Today the danger perhaps is in another direction. Religionists may be inhibited in their thinking and the free expression of their views by the stance of the countries they hail from. There should be no such seduction by narrowly nationalistic ties and sentiments! As servants of a higher Authority, we must exhibit a universalism which is fully in keeping with the value systems of the major world religions. Only through such an attitude could we one day hope to exorcise that other fear which is part and parcel of the equilibrium of terror and which must be shed if true peace is really to be achieved. Only so are we likely to provide a fitting answer to the call for full human development of each and all men everywhere and to the heart-rending cry for liberation from oppression that rises from the hearts of millions of our fellowmen, and to that hope of all for living and struggling together in brotherhood and love.

This implies an act of faith in man. It calls for and expects a change of heart in human persons. Perhaps that is a tall order but to hope for a better society without it is a sheer folly. In Toynbee's words: "The source of peace and of war is the interior life of each individual human spirit." And this is religion's role par excellence to be stressed in season and out of season, through worship and ritual, through teaching and life in all its aspects.

The application of this spirit to the social and international

field is a natural corollary unless we reduce the concept of religion to a purely individualist affair which has no bearing on society. Religion which only ends up with the "mine" and "thine" and reduces mankind to a multitude of individuals, as numerous as the sands of the seashore, all of whom show violently discordant inclinations, is not worthy of the name. True religion must bind man to man, as brother to brother, in the creation of one harmonious whole.

Echoing his moving appeal to the conscience of mankind in his historic address to the United Nations, Pope Paul VI asked these pointed questions: What should be done to fight against the conditions of life in the world which are incompatible with the dignity of the human person? What must be done to bridge the gap between nations which are prosperous and those which are in want? What must be done so that justice rooted in solidarity should reign? The first is to make man the focal point of our thinking; the second, to lift our vision to the entire human family; and the third, to see the quest for peace as wholeness of life as an enterprise of justice and love.

FOCUS ON MAN

Belonging to the very nature of peace is the correct attitude to man, his nature and dignity and the expression of consideration for others as human persons. The approach to security must recognise and rest upon the concern for man—any man, including our potential enemy—just because he is a man. As has been well said: "individual human beings are and should be the foundation, the end and the subjects of all the institutions in which social life is carried on." Institutions can never be given absolute priority over the worth of individual human beings. That is a religious standpoint we should warmly endorse.

So too there is a fundamental relationship between peace and human rights which is grounded in justice. Any structures which deprive persons of their human rights and dignity prevent justice from being realized and force men to resort to violence or war. Religion cannot be blind to such situations.

Then again, in discussing development we may not forget that "man is the source, the centre and the purpose of all economic and social life."

The principal purpose of productivity is not mere multiplication of products but the service of man and indeed of the whole man, his material needs and the demands of his intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious life. And because men now have the power to remove the causes of evil, whose symptoms alone they could treat before, our responsibility is not merely as persons for other people but also for the political and economic structures that bring about or perpetuate poverty, injustice and violence. Religion must address itself to the twin engines of economics and power which largely control the world situation.

THE ENTIRE HUMAN FAMILY

If there is hope for man and mankind in our time, it is because 'the human family' can no longer avoid recognizing itself. This is the basic message of Pope John's great call in "Pacem in Terries" as it is implicit in the mute appeal of Hiroshima: "May all peoples of the earth become as brothers." In the concrete, this common good requires bread and dignity for all; social, racial and international justice and the dismantling of international violence.

Enlightened self-interest is too meagre a motive to provide the policy that will solve our problems. And yet the opposing ideological concepts of the modern world all identify national self-interest with some essential human good; even old-fashioned patriotism—national self-love pure and simple—sees its very particularism as loyalty to a universal value. We must try to unify nation-building and the building of world community. Nationalism can be based on peaceableness and enlightened social action instead of on power seeking or empty symbols. Be that as it may, the unity of mankind is prior to the moral ideologies that divide it and demands a basic responsibility of all men and all nations for all of mankind. In the realm of peace making, this means co-existence; for the unity of mankind challenges us to a common achievement of a common good. In this respect the isolation of the People's Republic of China and other such sovereign republics from the broader community of nations is greatly to be deplored. The establishment of a world community of peoples is urgently demanded by the

requirements of the universal common good.

PEACE AS WHOLENESS OF LIFE

Next I would like to commend the radical meaning of peace which is the biblical concept of justice. It is summed up in wholeness of life as conveyed by the term "Shalom." It expresses the wholeness of full human life in a community of mutual sharing and affirmation. It includes prosperity, happiness, respect among friends and all that belongs to personal fulfilment. For a community, it means the efflorescence of its common life in all respects. It suggests an almost paradisal reign of security and abundance; it is something that lasts, something common to all men. Moreover, because the concrete demands of the common good of man are constantly changing, peace becomes a never-ending corporate quest on the part of all men of goodwill for a more human order. It is in this sense that development, the struggle of the needier nations for a better life, is the new name for peace and is an enterprise of justice, the establishment, namely of the disadvantaged in the full rights and possibilities of their humanity.

Doubtless, Peace begins in our own hearts but is not an evasion or forgetting of one's fellowmen. On the contrary, private life, public life, political life and internationl relations are all meant to be changed by the dynamics of peace into a life in harmony for the whole of mankind.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

The role of religion in its moral witness within the political order does not demand that we usurp the role of the diplomat or politician, the general or the merchant, or sit in judgement on heads of states. Our task as spokesmen for religion is to create a moral climate that gives hope of a better chance to the efforts and blueprints for peace that otherwise tend to remain merely mechanical or operate in a vacuum. It is a complementary role but one that is badly needed in the interests of those personal and community values that society at all levels exists to serve and prosper. Because of the growing permissiveness in society with its heavy emphasis on purely

subjective morality, this task of all religions has assumed poignant urgency. By this token, it is for us to give to the organization of world peace a dynamic, organic moral principle of life and growth.

At this stage, I would like to indicate a few specific issues which we might care to support.

It might be worthwhile to urge all responsible governments and competent authorities, at all levels, to ensure liberty of thought, conscience and religion and also the right to public manifestation of religion without discrimination and with a mutual respect for the convictions and beliefs of every individual—with due regard for the common good. All Religionists should demonstrate, in a positive way, their concern that all men everywhere be free to exercise without discrimination of any kind all the rights which are indispensable for a complete fulfilment of the human person.

A first move in the direction of future non-violent defensive strategies is the establishment of *the right of conscientious objection.* This is a religious issue. Inherent in the dignity of human beings is the exercise of conscientious judgement. Accordingly, each person should be assured the right on grounds of conscience or profound conviction to refuse military service or any other direct or indirect preparation in wars or armed conflicts.

By the same token, this should be extended to include a particular war or a conflict in which weapons of mass destruction are likely to be used or military orders issued involving the commission of criminal offences or war crimes against humanity. It will be for the Conference, if it thinks fit, to indicate the practical steps required to ensure this recognition under national and international law.

In line with this is the wider issue of *human rights.* They have been set down in writing; it is now necessary to do everything possible to make them operative.

Would it be in order for our Conference to endorse the proposal currently before the United Nations for the establishment of an office of a High Commissioner for Human Rights within the structure of the U.N.? Perhaps we could also go on record as urging all governments to ratify all the international conventions relating to human rights as a matter of top priority.

Such steps may not appear to concern religion directly but we cannot ignore the common man's conscience and his hopes and aspirations also in this area of life.

INTEGRAL HUMANISM

The world is trapped in the economic systems of nations and their cleverly made out budgets. Efforts in the field of world cooperation over the last two decades have been assessed largely by figures and statistics and growth in terms of G.N.P. From a human and religious standpoint it is as well that we remember and perhaps remind the world that economy in this limited sense is not life's highest value. And may be what is being witnessed today in high consumption societies bears this out where the trend is to make it a goal and ambition in life to be in a position to spend without let or hindrance! Before crass hedonism make further inroads, religion should come out forcefully on *the quality of human life* which we should all be endeavouring to promote. So too the motives of self-interest, which to a large extent underlie these business deals, are no substitute for that nobility of which men and nations are capable.

In speaking to the issue of international cooperation, we need not confine ourselves to the moral imperative behind development and the claims of human solidarity. This spirit of unselfish, mutual interdependence, for motives beyond economic returns, should not be ruled out. To turn the world into one huge business machine to be run on purely commercial lines is unworthy of man and the spirit of true religion.

On the other hand, economic development is a necessary condition of much of what we mean by humanisation and one reason why development is called the new name for peace is that growing sufficiency tends to reduce the tensions that breed strife. We live in a world where many men have high hopes for human well-being, justice and peace. These hopes are justified and their fulfilment could and should be speeded up by the force of true religion. Discovering and harnessing *the motivation in all religious traditions* to aid this process might be our specific contribution. This could well be a desirable follow-up. Not only might it make the notion more acceptable in traditional societies, it might also help to emphasize that, to

be authentic, development must be integral and promote the good of every man and of the whole man—man on his way to God. This needs to be insisted upon as part of the effort for peace.

And by the same token, there can be not true progress towards the complete development of man without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of universal solidarity.

PROPHETIC ROLE OF RELIGION

In the effort to assist humanity out of its present impasse, religion has prophetic role to play, which it should not shirk. It must address itself to the grassroots of conscience, to *the creation of public opinion, enlightened by morality* to which sooner or later all must render an account. The demand for an accounting will be either violent, i.e., a form of war, or it will be religious, that is to say an effort under God so to work together as to develop what makes for peace, so to discharge our duties as to make safe our rights, so to live our beliefs as to make them not only credible in the abstract but effective on the practical level of everyday life. All this in effect means the nonviolent building of a peaceful world order.

As Churchill put it twenty years ago: "The empires of the future will not be of rubber or cotton or oil, those which have caused the wars of the past and the present, but the empires of the mind and the spirit, the empires of those ideas and ideals of which religion in every race and culture and in every period of history has been the teacher, the custodian and defender."

We must feel in our bones that "the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity" and that we must work might and main for complete disarmament, for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent. Nuclear war has rightly been characterized as the end of reason. It involves the use of force out of all proportion to any possible good which may be brought about. There is no such thing as winning a thermo-nuclear war. As Walter Stein points out: "The possibility of launching a nuclear attack on an enemy implies such a colossal failure to recognise the value of human life as to reduce the whole operation to something sub-

human." And yet the gravest threat to mankind is not the existence and manufacture of these diabolic weapons spreading dark clouds of fear over mankind, but the temptation to resignation or apathy toward the possibility of their use. What more hideous inversion of values than this which proposes to wipe out God's proudest creation—MAN—and carefully preserve the passing creations of human technology! How can the spirit of religion be silent in the face of such barbarism!

And so I make a *plea* for *non-violence* not only as a citizen of the country that gave Gandhi to the world, not only as a follower of the Prince of Peace, but as a man, any man, a voice of the nameless millions of every creed and condition of men who are weary of violence and persuaded that the time for peace is right now and the place to begin right here.

And lest we shirk the real issue, let us recognize that millions around the world are becoming convinced every day that war begins not when it is declared but when its machinery is in the process of being built and that ultimately there may be no such thing as preventing the war by piling up armaments which will end up by making war inevitable. The risks of disarmament, as Kennedy pointed out, are much less than those of the arms race.

The voice of religion, when it speaks fully and authentically, denies that fear is the best to which man can rise and that it prevents war or produces true peace. Only love can do that and love knows no constraint and never carries a weapon! It may plead; it may persuade; it may suffer. But it never threatens. This is indeed a hard saying but it is the very essence of religion and we have no option but to point the way beyond the regimen of fear in which our lot is cast, to that higher ideal of brotherhood and love towards which all mankind, including hard-boiled politicians and military strategists, should also be striving in all their plans and policies. We cannot acquiesce in a situation in which mankind must be condemned for all time not even to look beyond the system of deterrent fear to the possibility of working together in understanding and brotherhood for the creation of a better world. War can have no future if human society is to survive. It is a choice between the one or the other.

PATHS TO PEACE

The chances of nuclear peace and later on a peace on earth progressively worked out through world institutions and international efforts giving priority to "the common good of all peoples" will be neither easy nor a painless operation. But it will be even further away till religion takes a stand on nuclear violence, in all objectivity, care, information and intelligence, but above all in faith in God and faith in human nature.

And, as for the question: "Will non-violence work as a substitute for war?", the answer in Roszak's words is not an assertion or a statement of probability but a commitment: "We must make it work!" even as, generally speaking, it has been accepted as a substitute in life for other forms of social violence.

However arduous the steps towards total disarmament they must be taken. And to relativise and limit the influence of the great powers and preclude narrow nationalism it might be helpful to suggest the formation of *Regional Councils* for human rights, development and security—e.g. for the countries of Asia. The power of decision would thus be shared and spread to more groups around the world. But religion has more to offer.

The new world of freedom, security and peace for all can be achieved only by those who are moved by great *spiritual ideals*. It is the only way to live a coherent and meaningful life in the midst of today's great upheavals. And true universality of spirit consists not in knowing much but in loving widely.

Divine imperatives must not be confounded with human tactics. The means we use cannot be those of power and overwhelming pressure but, in the words of Pope Paul, the infectious witness of a love which reveals to ourselves and to our fellowmen the sin which separates us, and through prayer and penance opens men's hearts to justice, solidarity and brotherhood.

When Gandhi was asked one evening during his period of prayer: "What would be your first act if at this moment you would have power to shape the destinies of mankind?" He replied after a suspense of silence: "I would pray for the courage instantly to renounce that power." This attitude will receive its best support from religion lived and experienced in the

depths of the human heart in openness to God and in growing union with Him.

Much as we are to strive collectively to bring to bear the force of religion on the burning issues of the day, we may not forget that another major contribution to the cause of peace is *at the level of the individual person.* If man and men everywhere experiencing God in the intimacy of the heart in true bhakti were to live in harmony with themselves and those around them, bridges of understanding and brotherhood would be built at the grassroots level. And there lies man's greatest hope for a better world.

This is the interior disposition which ought to be the basis of all transformation of society and every religion would concur in giving priority to this conversion of men to mutual respect and honour as a basis for peace in our own hearts and in society.

As Gandhi wrote forty years ago in Young India: "The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world; the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable."

To go a step further: The interests of world loyalty require that we learn to appreciate other traditions of life. That is one of the strengths of this Conference—that it is a meeting point of diverse religious traditions and cultures. The question is—could it likewise become a point of departure for a new spirit and a new way of life for humanity? Could there be a *follow-up* that would in time get all the great world religious traditions to speak with one voice for man and the conscience of mankind on the burning issues that face the world in its onward march? Could a summit meeting of the world's topmost religions leaders point one day to the formation of a world body—a sort of parliament of world religions, with the independence and impartiality of a judiciary—unhesitatingly and fearlessly proclaiming and upholding what is in the interests of the common good of all peoples? The answer depends on you and what you make of the Conference.

To conclude: In a world tortured either by its own abundance or by the lack of it, we shall not find in indifference or self-indulgence the moral energy to change ourselves and the

social order in which we live. The energy must be sought from above, in what real religion has always proclaimed, the strength of the divine and the search and conquest of inner space in the heart of man and a return to the great realities of prayer, sacrifice and grace.

The agonies of the contemporary world are crying out for such a vision and for that fullness of energy of the Spirit to fill the hearts of young and old, for the renewal of the face of the earth.

2

Religion and the Quality of Life

I would like to begin on a note of hope. Notwithstanding its limitations, the United Nations Organisation still represents the path that governments and people are obliged to take to achieve a responsible development of mankind in its quest for peace.

In this year of unprecedented global consultations, the Bucharest Population Conference just finishing and the World Food Conference scheduled for November in Rome stand out as notable occasions when governments, and not just United Nations agencies, have agreed to meet to consider these crucial questions and to take action on them. This is a welcome sign towards the strengthening of that political will to deliver the goods without which significant headway is impossible.

To grasp the opportunity and release the hope enshrined in such events, it is necessary to be seized of the "crisis situation" of today's world. We are meeting at a fateful moment in human history. Any realistic appraisal of the global picture whether for man as an individual or society as a whole, must perforce be heavily laden with problems and liabilities. In the fields of our endeavour the record of world tensions has been particularly grim.

Address to the Second World Conference of Religion for Peace at Louvain, Belgium, on 28th August 1974.

A DISMAL RECORD

The first development decade was a flop; Unctad III as good as a failure; inroads on the economy have been made by multinational corporations. After two decades and a half of world cooperations, it has come to light that the developed countries have benefited more economically from aid programmes than the beneficiaries themselves! And paradoxically enough, public aid has diminished in proportion as the income of developed countries increased! The first appraisal of the international development strategy is far from encouraging; the performance of the majority during the 1970s will most likely fall significantly short of the targets. What is worse—even if the targets were achieved the needs ahead would not be met!

The year 1971 brought us the international monetary crisis with the end not yet in sight! There has been war and skirmishes have recurred in the Middle East. The situation continues to be tense and uncertain. India and Pakistan went to war and a ten million refugee problem and brutality of the first order culminated in an independent Bangla Desh. The prolonged agony of Vietnam and the Far East continued to baffle or enrage the conscience of mankind. Mainland China entered the United Nations and not long after the closing of an epoch and the beginning of another was dramatically projected at Stockholm, by the environmental problem with its heavy repercussions on justice, development and peace in the world. A source of great concern today is the highly explosive situation in Cyprus.

With regard to the arms race in general, surveys have revealed that the fear of an all-out war has fostered post-war disillusionment of the youth in many countries. Helpless before armed might, they have grown in violence and alienation which has manifested itself in riots, demonstrations, sexual revolution and rebellion against all standards. Such a state of affairs is more destructive of man than nuclear weapons themselves!

The major causes of world tensions seem to be operative today, all at the same time and in top gear! Political differences showing up in self-centred narrow nationalisms or manifested in periodic resort to crude power—whether political, economic or military, the rise in the quantity and destructive potential of

nuclear armaments, the ever-widening economic gap between the North and the South with its crop of problems, including the nightmare of unemployment and underemployment for millions of frustrated young persons in their most formative, creative and promising, years, racial discrimination, the legacy of colonial systems, gross violations of human rights and brutality in various forms, including cold-blooded massacre, and a rash of devilishly devised "torture" of prisoners in more than sixty states—that has been the order of the day!

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM

A new manifestation that came to the fore with the Stockholm Conference is the Environmental crisis, resulting largely from the pattern of economic growth and the social mismanagement of the world's resources. It has compounded the issues of poverty, population, war and peace! As Barry Commoner has put it: "We live in a time that is dominated by enormous technical power and extreme human need. The power is painfully self-evident in the megawattage of power plants and in the megatonnage of nuclear bombs. The human need is evident in the sheer numbers of people now and soon to be living, in the deterioration of their habitat, the earth, and in the tragic world-wide epidemic of hunger and want. The gap between brute power and human need continues to grow, as the power fattens, on the same faulty technology that intensifies the need."

The rudderless voyage, Progress, has begun to backfire; the merely "outer vision" of the "one-eyed giant", the "king of quantity" unconsciously rejecting what is deepest and most vital in himself, has brought about what Coomaraswamy years ago called a crisis of sanity—the problems of mentally deranged people magnified a thousand times because they have the full straight-faced approbation of a "schizoid society". "We are at war with ourselves and therefore at war with one another". Man's consciousness is all fouled up and he does not apprehend reality as it fully and really is, and hence his greatest need today is to be delivered from the evil and falsity in himself and in society. Writing in the days of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, L.L. Whyte referred to "behaviour patterns unrelated

to organic needs" and a "relentless passion for quantity", "uncontrolled industrialism and excess of analytical thought", without the catharsis of rhythmic relaxation or satisfying achievement". How prophetic was his analysis, but tragic too in that the situation has worsened since then.

Going to the heart of the matter, Thomas Merton in his reflections on Gandhi, pointed out that "a society that lives by organized greed or by systematic terrorism and oppression (they come to much the same thing in the end) will always tend to be violent because it is in a state of persistent disorder and moral confusion."

ENERGY CRISIS

The latest spanner in the works, the oil squeeze serves more than ever to throw into bold relief the crisis of the spirit that is man's most crucial problem today. Would it be out of place to begin by asking: Is the crisis due only to the Arab States turning off oil supplies? Or are the causes to be traced still further back, for instance to the impending exhaustion of a finite natural resource and to the power and profit arrangements of large multi-national corporations? As a result of the blockade, world tensions have spiralled considerably and they have not yet been satisfactorily settled. The principle of self-centred national interest as holding pride of place came through with a bang as one nation after another of the European economic community struck off on its own to negotiate favourable deals in utter disregard of common obligations and the fate of the community! The impact of sharply increased cost of fuel on the Third World has been little short of disastrous. The World Bank secret report on the oil needs of 39 less developed countries has been withheld for fear of causing panic. Rising prices of oil means less money for development, scarcity of fertilizer, the slowing down, if not reversing, of the Green Revolution and a foreign exchange bill which will wipe out in effect the total development assistance from the North to the South. A world-wide food crisis seems to be already on the way in.

To add political insult to economic injury, even large third world oil-consuming nations were unashamedly excluded from

the February parleys in Washington! Perhaps other by-products of the disaster are still to be expected! Will there be more galloping inflation, widespread unemployment and monetary instability? Will there be a recurrence of "protectionism", an "everyman for himself" tactic by panicky nations? Will development aid for the poor of the world be the first victim? Will there be continued cut-throat competition among the industrial powers to secure crucial energy resources and raw materials? How and where will the Arab States spend their single-year pile of roughly sixty-six billion dollars? Will an all-out trade war bring the world to a devastating global depression?

AN ERA OF ANGUISH

Today's world situation represents the gravest economic and political threat in two decades to international understanding and world peace. Dr Kissinger was right in stating that "no single country or group of countries can solve the problem alone and that the energy situation has become a test of the proposition that the world has become truly interdependent and that isolation and selfish approaches must be destructive for all concerned". Well might we ask—are we experiencing the fruits of the inheritance of Babel—the results of the inherited separation between man and God, producing division among men themselves? Be that as it may, in the midst of the disorder and suffering, contemporary man is in search for meaning, for direction in his life, a reason for living. He is certainly passing through a spiritual crisis and living in an era of anguish.

RELIGION FOR TODAY

The overall theme of Religion and the Quality of Life, could scarcely have been taken up for consideration at a more opportune moment. This is not only because the break-up of the theme, as it will be studied in the work groups and panel discussions, touches on the very elements that are the occasion if not the cause of the malady, but because the malaise itself is a moral and spiritual one affecting the whole of man and all of mankind.

This is not to suggest that religion should displace science and technology, economics and politics, but that the spirit of religion be brought into association with these disciplines as they work together in partnership for a better humanity. Even in a world which is secular and autonomous the religious dimension still facinates man. Religion in fact faces a great opportunity to penetrate the new insights into man and creation, to cooperate with scientists in being disinterestedly concerned about man and his true welfare. Science and technology likewise need the moral experience and ethical intuition of religion.

FAITH AND ACTION

Often enough there is disharmony between religious belief and action. Conformism in a religious sense, viz., to ritual and practices of worship without any corresponding social concern, sometimes generates just docile resignation or else plain passivity before the existing situation. The life-size problems of today's world fail to be seen as such either because behaviour patterns are almost predetermined in a consumer society, or because social concern is not accepted as part and parcel of religion and worship. In a word, micro-ethics, the private standards of individuals have loomed large in religions but macro-ethics, i.e. being concerned about the way the society one lives in is conducted, is still rare.

It will have to be a deeper understanding of religion that could meet today's challenges; one's prayerful regard for God not turning our eyes away from worldly tasks but sharpening our vision of what must be done; our availability to the presence of the transcendent increasing rather than diminishing our energy for human concerns. Actually, the man of faith whose vision has been refined by intimacy with the mystery of God is best fitted to understand man in his totality and so to be of genuine service. The quality of man's life in this last quarter of the century depends among other things on whether the spirit of religion, as concretized e.g. in prayer and contemplation, can establish an active link with life as it is and with the caravan of history.

Such a positive approach to earthly realities on the part of

traditional living faiths and religious experience seems imperative in today's world and with it a greater understanding of the dignity, rights and destiny of the human person and a passion for universal brotherhood.

POINTS OF ENTRY FOR MORAL CONCERN

Power seems to have been the motive behind international relations for the last few centuries, the power of industrial technology, the power of the economic machine and the power of the nation state. Apparently, the conference at Stockholm witnessed the faint beginnings of a shift of emphasis to responsibility. The Secretary General himself called for a spiritual renewal when he outlined the behaviour pattern for a new epoch: "To thrive in the ecological age, we must adopt new dimensions of cooperative behaviour, subject our competitive drives to new disciplines, show a wholly new willingness to share the power and the benefits of the high technology civilisation as well as its responsibilities. This is true both nationally and internationally. "And to make the choices which will decide the ultimate fate of men will require a degree of collective wisdom and enlightenment that can only come through a new moral and spiritual awakening." A similar new impact seems to have characterised the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the problems of raw materials and development. When it ended, it left behind the feeling that possibly something new had taken place. All the points had been discussed before, all the working documents repeated earlier pleas and proposals, yet something decisive must have taken place for Mr Ivor Richard to have said at the end: "Things will never be the same again." The most far-reaching suggestion was a loosening and changing of all the supposed "blocks" or "worlds". The Irish delegate seems to have implied that the Conference provided the emotional impact necessary to stimulate the complex world political system into action, even though it was the shock therapy of the energy crisis and the sharp upward revision of oil prices that brought the nations together. Hopefully this points to Mumford's fresh cultural transformation in the making: "one which will recognize that the money economy is bankrupt and the power complex has

become, through its very excesses and exaggerations, impotent, and that a new life-economy is in the making." Barbara Ward sums up by saying: "The opportunity thus offered to the leaders of the United Nations is alarmingly great. The most powerful communities are beginning to wonder whether they can go it alone! It is certainly a consummation devoutly to be wished for that they start to "build the earth!"

CREATING UNITY OF CONSCIENCE

Nations are made up of human beings and the real task is to build peace into their minds. Our young and educated people must have minds which are independent and objective, detached and inquiring, devoted to the investigation of truth in respect of the issues that arise in a country or neighbourhood and which affect its security and prosperity. The same exercise has to be performed in respect of higher levels of society.

Today's battle is for the minds of men. Each of the great ideologies is preoccupied with itself and is convinced that the other is wrong and bound to fail. Mistrust and fear result and they are the source of all our problems and the basic fact behind the cold war. The present detente is itself a clear indication of this, even while it is to be hailed, encouraged and prospered in every way.

The independent investigation of truth must lead men to the full acceptance of the oneness of humanity, to the conviction that all men are brothers and that they must work together for a full human life for each and all who are called by the name of man. Universal peace is of great importance but unity of conscience is essential. It is here that religion must take a positive stand and become a cause and force for fellowship among men. This means the abandonment in all humility of prejudices of all kinds—religious, racial, political, economic, ultra-patriotic—which divide men into hostile sects, groups, parties, classes, nations. The legitimate love of country must not be perverted into hatred and fear of all nations except one's own. 'Patriotic prejudice', as it has been called, is the result of absolute ignorance, since the surface of the earth is one native land. Each and everyone in our global village of today's world must feel and act like a true citizen of the world.

The things which unite men are more important than the things which divide them, and a unity of conscience must be created and deepened around the basic convictions shared by all living faiths, as they seek to provide collective wisdom and enlightenment and generate the political will for the fray. The elements would certainly include:

—A faith that our present human condition does not exhaust reality;

—A conviction of the fundamental oneness of the human family, and the equality and dignity of all human beings;

—A sense of the value of human community and of person in community;

—A sense of the sacredness of the individual person and his conscience;

—A realization that might is not right; that human power is not self-sufficient and absolute;

—A belief that love, compassion, selflessness, and the force of inner truthfulness and of the spirit have ultimately greater power than hate, enmity and self-interest;

—A sense of obligation to stand on the side of the poor and the oppressed in the common effort to promote peace and social, political and economic justice;

—A recognition of worship and personal prayer as spiritual disciplines sustaining genuine values;

—A conviction that dialogue is an important contribution to world community;

—A profound hope that good will finally prevail.

The force for all this must come from within, from a deeper interiority that makes of us full, harmonized human beings, signs and symbols of that wholeness of life which we want for others, the dynamic, corporate pursuit of which goes by the name of peace—*shalom*. The distinctively human part of man's nature, his freedom in the spirit, must be given full play. Only so will he be able to transcend his limitations and become peace himself. If, experiencing God in the cave of the heart, men everywhere lived in harmony with themselves and with those around them in the family, office and neighbourhood, bridges of understanding and brotherhood would be built at the grassroots level. And therein lies man's greatest hope for a better world. In the world of mankind, there are

two safeguards that protect man from wrong-doing; one is the law that punishes the criminal; but the law prevents only the manifest crime and not the concealed sin. It is oneness with God and the growth and education of man's conscience through constant communion with the divine that ultimately will bring about that change of heart and reconciliation between men, through which alone can come the transformation of society. Every religion will concur in giving priority to this concern of men to mutual respect and honour as a basis for peace in our hearts and in society.

It might be useful to remember at this point that the Gandhian concept of non-violent action is not so much a political tactic for achieving goals of liberation or a means of achieving unity but rather is it the result of inner unity already achieved. The mission of religionists is not just to join others in helping to get the desired structural changes in society but even more to help to change man's consciousness, to provoke an interior change in men and to provide a strong and dynamic religious motivation, wisdom from on high as a beacon to give light and compassion as a force to give life and spirit to the corporate quest for brotherhood and peace.

SPIRITUAL NON-ALIGNMENT

In the context of modern society in which consumption has to be artificially stimulated to keep production going, so that consumption for consumption's sake, unwittingly perhaps, becomes an accepted objective, religion must proclaim that affluence pursued for its own sake, the "good life" and "the great society" spread over the globe are not desirable goals either for individuals or nations. A high standard of living does not necessarily lead to a high quality of life. The "indices of happiness" must give pride of place to the moral or qualitative content of life and not, even unwittingly, to limitless consumerism resulting in appalling wastage of resources. An economy of plenty is a different matter, if it is for a civilisation of human brotherhood and world solidarity.

"A new style of life" and an effort to improve the "quality of living" and give up consumption of a lot of less necessary commodities seems a natural corollary. The accustomed "style

of life", however, has great staying power particularly in a highly competitive society, where every group is only bent on raising its income and levels of living. This is where the spirit of real religion has to find a place in human life; possession must turn into liberty and man must become truly free in surrender to his Maker and in service to his fellowmen. There is a common oppression of all men by the material values which determine all economic and social activity. If we want to halt man's wanton march towards self-destruction it seems imperative that our goals in life be refined and that we pursue not so much the multiplication of wants, but in Gandhi's words, "the deliberate and voluntary reduction of the same." This is a sort of spiritual non-alignment, spelling detachment of the spirit and freedom from selfishness, greed and lust for power. True wholeness of life means not only a more equitable distribution of the world's goods, but also the safeguarding of personal values, respect for the dignity of the human person, concern for the whole man, man on his way to God, empathy for peoples and their way of life and a studied practice of brotherhood.

By the same token, we may not ignore the growing threat to life and its quality from a "moral imperialism" operating within nations on the aged, the poor, prisoners and other weaker sections of society and exported into other countries sometimes even within the framework of aid programmes conditioned by acceptance of what are euphemistically described as eugenic measures! Is this not tantamount to ideological manipulation of the weak by the strong? A form of political pressure? In a mechanistic view of man, in which a person becomes or is seen to become only a function of society or of the earth or of the cosmos, where there is no God or recognition of the transcendental, then of course, we have the complete erosion of the right to life. Alexander Solzenitsyn's comment in "Candle in the wind" is very much to the point: "We took a marvel of nature . . . interfering with the most perfect thing on earth, namely man, and turned it into a stone."

In working then for the true liberation of the economically poor of the world, can the rich free themselves from the dehumanizing influence of their riches? In other words, can the proper understanding of the integral development of man and the pursuit of true "wholeness of life" bring about freedom for

rich and poor alike, the partnership between peoples becoming in the process a mutually enriching experience—"liberation-cooperation" (Sarvodaya Shramadhana). This stewardship in the use of the world's resources—time, talent and treasure—manifests an appreciation of the gift of the Creator and becomes in effect an act of worship.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF TECHNOLOGY

Another area clamouring for discerning attention is the social function of technology. Both the protagonists and the critics of technique seem to regard it as a kind of self-determining juggernaut, uncontrollable by human will and altering the pattern of society in favour of the machine. This, explains Professor Galbraith, is because technology is built on faith—faith in itself, or as another social scientist would have it, because "after Hiroshima the loyalty of science is not to humanity but to truth—its own truth—not to what humanity thinks of as good, meaning moral, decent, humane, but to the law of the possible. What it is possible for technology to do, technology will have done." The fault in technology according to Galbraith, appears to derive from one of its fundamental postulates, namely reductionism, the view that effective understanding of a complex system can be achieved by investigating the properties, of its isolated parts. Much as this methodology may be the accepted standpoint of modern science as a whole, the author of the Closing Circle assures us that as far as ecology is concerned it has proved a failure. Moreover, continues commoner, since reductionism tends to isolate scientific disciplines from each other and from the human problems of the real world, its stance is quite inadequate. Hence, "those who believe in the priority of human values" will understandably agree with Archibald MacLeish when he concludes that "the resultant frustration, real and debasing, in which we are mired today will not leave us until we believe in ourselves again, assume again the mastery of our lives, the management of our means." Value judgements on the use of nuclear power, radiation, bacterial warfare, etc. are matters of morality, of social and political decision and do not belong to the competence of technology.

A holistic approach is likewise called for to restore the

inter-dependence between man and nature. Human harmony with nature fits in admirably as a kind of counterpoint to the more basic discovery of God in the city of man. The same goes for the subjects to be discussed in this Conference. A multi-disciplinary treatment, for example, of the world population problem would have to include the physiology of reproduction, the biology of sex and race, the sociology of families and larger groups, the economics of agricultural and industrial production, world trade and international politics. Rather specifically the population question must be situated within the overall strategy of development. It is clearly part of a larger political question, the relationship between the rich North and the needy South and the historical development of the two groups, already from the days of colonialism. The motto of the World Population Year: "One World for All" should gladly be hailed and pursued with the dedication demanded by the challenge. Development in turn cannot be dissociated from the disarmament problem, because the enormous resources frittered away in the arms race could and should be redirected to raise standards of living and to promote faster growth especially in developing countries.

The temptation to short circuit the intricate web of economic, social and political issues and to try and deal with them in isolation is a reductionist trend which is bound to end in failure. We are baffled no doubt by a host of social ills threatening both man and his environment. It is not by power and pressure of strong over weak but by the creation of new, healthy social relationships that civilized governments and peoples will hopefully struggle along together as creative partners in search of a new city.

U. Thant reminded us in the sixties that "Peace is not only a collective obligation but also an indivisible responsibility, in the sense that peace cannot be split into its political, economic, social or cultural components, in the vain hope of solving one without tackling the other." Science and religion must get together and work together. If we divide them they will divide us. If we bring them together in a harmonious relationship there is hope for the future. The dialogue between Eastern and Western religious philosophies is reaching a certain level of seriousness. That is an encouraging phenomenon.

The materials for a synthesis of wisdom and science are not lacking. The United Nations granting to the World Conference of Religion for Peace consultative status with ECOSOC is certainly a hopeful sign. If you see in this an implicit recognition on the part of the world body of the role of religions in global affairs for creating the moral climate and buttressing the political and social efforts for peace, then it will be for you to assume full and practical responsibility for the uncertain future of our organisation. If the World Conference of Religion for Peace is to deliver the goods, a strong secretariate in Europe seems a natural sequel to this meeting. More important will be the determination of the religionists here present to work towards world community at local levels in their own countries and where feasible, in this many-cultured and multi-religious fashion.

AN APPEAL

In conclusion, I would like to draw pointed attention to the most critical of the pressures on the world today—food for the hungry millions. A declaration by concerned world citizens rightly states that no link unites the family of man more than his need for food. When seen against the unprecedented population increase, the present unstable food pattern clamours with poignant urgency and immediacy, not for panic, but for a massive concerted effort on the part of the entire world community. The emergency fund suggested at the special United Nations General Assembly earlier this year might become just that—a massive world effort—if public opinion for a giant breakthrough is made to result from today's "crisis situation". Hopefully the common suffering occasioned everywhere by the energy crisis will link the peoples of the earth in closer bonds for the future.

May I request that our Conference issue an urgent appeal to the nations gathering in Rome in November to develop a comprehensive and constructive World Food Plan for speedy adoption; to establish food reserves to provide continuing vital insurance against food shortages and to situate these measures within a total strategy of development?

In the name of God and the entire family of man, let us

"call upon all governments and peoples everywhere, rich and poor, regardless of political and social systems, to act--to act together and to act in time."

3

Religion in the Struggle for World Community

The establishment of peace through justice and love, humanly speaking, will always remain an unfinished symphony. The unity of religion and life is not that easily achieved; it must be evolved in a dynamic, organic way. The personal and corporate struggle actively undertaken is a source of hope and strength, even as it is, in effect, the path to peace and joy for man and all mankind.

At our first meeting in Kyoto in 1970, we recognized the need for humble repentance because religious institutions, structures and people have also been, whether by commission, or omission, the occasion, if not the cause, of inflicting suffering and denying man freedom and his true dignity. Nine years later we still have to hang our heads in shame because of the indignities that continue to be committed around the globe in the name of religion; and because of the inadequacy of the 'healing' and 'reconciliation' that has been undertaken under religious auspices. Concerning the first of these, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan has written recently: "I cannot think of a greater blasphemy than those crimes that degrade man with the sanction of dharma (religion). Whatever of dharma is left in the present

Inaugral Address at the Third World Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, at Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A., on 29th August 1979.

atmosphere of creeping materialism, benumbed ethical sensibility, pseudo-science and undigested vulgar modernism would surely bleed to death if brother continues to knife brother only because he worships God differently."

At the threshold of this last quarter of the century, we reminded ourselves at Louvain that disharmony between religious belief and action stems, among other causes, from an individualistic and purely cultic concept of religion and from lack of social or corporate concern about the life-size problems of the family of man.

THE GLOBAL SCENARIO

The crisis situation of the world as I described it then—economic, political, environmental, vis-a-vis energy, and in man himself—has, if anything, worsened. The scene varies from country to country, but by and large, an ever-growing number of societies are characterized by inequalities and injustices of a structural nature, by alienation of all kinds and deprivation of the worst order. According to the World Development Report 1978, eight hundred million people in the developing world still live in absolute poverty. About 40 per cent of the world's population, i.e. about 810 million cannot read or write. Three hundred million people are unfit to work due to physical problems that can be traced to foul water. (International Development, 1977, Vol. I) The Text of today's story of man is confined to the doings of a small minority of people. The vast majority form the margin which is far bigger than the text itself. They are the non-story of the marginalised masses of mankind who just do not count.

During the third quarter of this century most Asian and African countries achieved political independence; but the seventy-nine years of this century have still been dominated by the North and the West, thanks to technology and international trade, not to say anything of the contrivances that have kept this so.

Notwithstanding the fact that the third world has far greater natural resources than the developed world, economic independence did not accompany or follow the end of colonialism. Figures for 1976 show that the developed countries

with 25 per cent of population still controlled two-thirds of the world's income and three-fourths of international trade.

From the standpoint of economics, it is a glaring fact that progress in bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries has been far from satisfactory, except perhaps for some conceptual gains. Four hundred billion dollars are spent annually on armaments and even the petro-dollars have found their way back into the industrialized countries. When arms sales are in question, all thought of the "human rights" of the disadvantaged of the world seems to be forgotten. The military budgets of the two super-powers are a scandal and those of even developing countries a crying shame. The glut of consumer luxury articles foisted on the poor in place of much more basic necessities is hardly to the credit of transnational corporations. Meanwhile inflation is on the rampage again, threatening a major recession at world level, even as the debate on natural resources also points to confrontation if not conflagration.

Alongside the fabulous sums wasted on destructive purposes, the sum total of international economic cooperation for humanitarian goals appears a mere flea-bite, a piece of sham, a brazen mockery of the poor of the world. Nor has Unctad V registered any remarkable victories of a tangible nature. Even the projected increase from fourteen billion dollars in 1975 to forty-four billion dollars in 1985 (in current prices) accounts for only 0.39 per cent of donors' GNP instead of the internationally accepted target of 0.7 per cent. However, Mr McNamara still hopes for a 50 per cent increase in real terms in official Development Assistance by the year 1985.

If to the above are added the billions spent by individuals and groups on their shopping sprees—one such accounted for 300,000 dollars in one evening at Beverley Hills—and their permanent exhibition of lavish spending and luxurious living, one can hardly escape the conclusion that "selfishness, greed and stupidity" are winning out, with concern for man and his future taking a back place. The total picture is shocking and revolting; it is also extremely explosive and suggestive of coming disaster.

Politically speaking, the 150 states of today's "global village" can hardly be said to be pulling together or even

indicating a trend towards unity, or equality, whether in their philosophy, systems of government or actual practice. The two super-powers between them have got quite a few of the lesser countries into assuming the role of satellites. Many of the governments of Middle East, Africa, South America and Asia are like toys in their hands.

What is more, the big powerful countries of today have had to have recourse to expensive and sophisticated security systems, police and spy networks; and yet they appear to be powerless to cope with the onslaughts of organized terrorism, lawlessness and crime. What are the prospects for unity and harmony between communist dictatorships, capitalistic neo-colonialist powers, oil-rich Arab potentates, plot-ridden, revolutionary South American States and non-aligned countries?

Is it any wonder that the recent world efforts towards detente, non-proliferation, reconciliation in the Middle East, disarmament, etc., have proved to be abortive? Perhaps the salt II conclusions hold out some hope.

The effect on man has been devastating. From the social perspective there is no question that we are dealing with a diseased situation. One need only list the symptoms of the malaise—the disintegration of the family and of moral and spiritual values; the crop of "nervous depressions" in the affluent countries; the alarming increase in alcoholism and drug addiction in all age groups and in both sexes; the massive scale of pornography, prostitution, abortion and universal licentiousness debasing man to the level of the beast and robbing him of meaning and purpose in his life; precipitating frenzied acts of planned, premeditated terrorism and driving him to brutal orgies of violence, sex and bloodshed. The Chief Justice of Spain has described "the modern social climate as a perfectly adequate medium for the growth and boundless development of crime and lawlessness". Books, magazines, Television, the cinema, the communications media in general seem to be hand in glove with the purveyors of this permissiveness in all its forms. The result is that men and women everywhere, but especially large numbers of teenagers, adolescents and youth, have not only been drawn away from the pursuit of ideals but dragged down to the opposite end of the scale with scarcely any hope of liberation from the system's grip of iron.

The ecological imbalance only accentuates the problem, posing a threat not only to the life of man and to his freedom to live responsibly, but to his very survival on earth. One of the background papers sums it up tersely: "The developed market economy practised by some twenty-six constitutional democracies, the developed centrally planned economy practised by thirteen socialist countries, and the developing economies of a hundred and ten countries in some measure linked to one or both groups of developed economies are widening the gap between the wealth and the physical quality of life of the richer portions of humanity and those of the poorer, even as they begin to exhaust or pollute the earth's unrenewable natural resources." (Schomer, p. 2).

The *saving grace* is that there are signs everywhere of people awakening to an awareness and recognition of their human selves, affirming their rights and clamouring for "bread" and "freedom", for dignity and equality. Particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the sleeping giant has arisen and is determined to have a say and to play his part in the making of a new society. The call for a new International Economic Order is one expression of this awareness and affirmation.

All this is part of the struggle for world community in which, whether we like it or not, we religionists too are a part and to which we have chosen to address ourselves in this Third Assembly of the World Conference of Religion for Peace.

Hopefully, we shall have made some contribution to the search for a new vision; to the resources for the common undertaking and to the spirit of courage and hope which, come rain come shine, will continue to keep us together on the journey to Peace.

THE PEOPLE'S ONGOING STRUGGLE

We must not harbour the illusion that we are initiating the struggle. It is on and we must make our contribution. The pattern of the struggle is not the same everywhere. For the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America, basic economic and social needs constitute the first priority. In many countries the problems are compounded by foreign political, economic and military intervention. The spectre of transnational corporations

haunts many a nation especially in Latin America. Along with the peoples of Asia and Africa, they agonize over the human rights issue, the extension of authoritarian systems and the implications of the concept of national security. Land rights and land tenure are a burning question in Asia and the Pacific region.

In the North and West, the issues that appear to be central are very different: the energy problem or rather alternatives to the present options—also in military technology; industrial redeployment; solutions to the unemployment created by structural reform; self-reliance in raw materials and their use. In socialist countries the preoccupation seems to be largely with co-existence and the prevention of war as a prerequisite for a just, participatory and viable society.

In all regions the sometimes conflicting claims of social justice and sustainability clamour for attention. (cfr. W.C.C. Document no. 8 of Kingston Report, January 1979.) The maintenance of their spiritual identity is also a major concern for multitudes of people everywhere especially with minorities, migrant workers, refugees and hordes of stateless people.

RELIGIOUS REACTIONS

The historical reality described above is reflected also within the confines of all religious traditions. Reactions of people vary considerably. Some are just indifferent and unconcerned; some plain apathetic; others experience a crisis of faith and a loss of meaning and drift into a world of their own. Others are concerned but perplexed. Yet others blandly support the existing structures out of a comforting sense of loyalty to history and tradition. Large numbers just fall in line with the thinking of the majority. However, because of the intense efforts of a few especially in the last decades, a growing number are now feeling called to commit themselves to the struggle as an expression of their religious faith. They are ready and willing to join hands with others in a common enterprise. They may not all do the same thing. They are brothers but brothers are different and there are no universal answers as to what a particular person should do. All are called to different possibilities which must be discovered in prayerful reflection leading

to a dedicated commitment.

It is from such a situation and with such people that a world community has to emerge; it is in response to this challenge that WCRP has to make its contribution to the ongoing process of transformation towards more justice, dignity, meaning and fulfilment in human societies everywhere.

A NEW WORLD COMMUNITY: A TRANSCENDENT IDEAL

First and foremost, what do we understand by world community? Community is not envisaged as one uniform world system. There are far too many divergencies for that; people's views of history, their understanding of the present historical situation, the way they speak or write about the ultimate, their attitudes to signs, symbols, places of pilgrimage; the role of ritual, devotions, experience of God, and the measure of their concern for men in society.

One must perforce take a pluralistic understanding of world community which would mean that peoples everywhere in their regions live harmoniously in community and all together around the world in communion one with the other.

There are common threats in the face of which we must unite, the physical pollution of the environment, the growing moral decadence and disruption of the family, the decline of spiritual values, the scourge of hunger, and its concomitants, in large measure the outcome of exploitation; the ravages of "patriotic prejudice" or national chauvinism and oppressive ideologies; the erosion of human rights.

Similarly, there is common ground binding us together—"a conviction of the fundamental unity of the human family and the equality and dignity of all human beings": "a sense of the value of human community" and of universal interdependence; an openness to others and to responsible change; a readiness to share one's resources and take one's responsibility with and for all other persons. Such a spirit of concern and sharing is the touchstone of world community.

Notwithstanding the hurdles along the road and the inadequacy of our efforts, we religionists should not shy away from pointing to and working for a new world community. No doubt this is a transcendent ideal but the concept is a useful

tool both for evaluating our own performance and as an orientation point for all social endeavours. Obviously, we must not be naive or simplistic in the face of present-day realities; an utopian approach would be disastrous. We must take stock first of all of the actual influence wielded by or available to religious initiative and activity; secondly, we should assess our limitations and capacities, and then plan for some reasonable and realistic targets to be achieved, perhaps, in collaboration with like-minded bodies.

In as much as a community building involves a right reordering of *relationships*, we would perforce have to study the ongoing dealings between developed and developing nations, and the precise point at which they are at the moment. We would have to explore the implications of violence and nonviolence in the current struggle for liberation. Roadblocks to world community are to be found also within nations, especially in newly-formed states, thanks to problems of nationalism, regionalism, communalism, linguism, tribalism, etc.

Similar problems exist also within religious traditions, especially if they are searching for an identity or have recently come into their own and are conscious of the need for acceptance. Movements like WCRP, which leave intact the beliefs, rites, observances of each tradition, could help religionists towards a new spirit of openness especially in respect of the common struggle for justice and human dignity. This might bring to light those elements in each tradition conducive to the achievement of community, even as a genuine spirit of renewal could identify and minimize, if not eliminate, any untoward accretions that have been accumulated with the passage of time. Religious traditions are varied and different. They must each have an opportunity of making a specific contribution to the common cause. Harmony and concord must be manifested even between people of different convictions.

As for the *resources* which we have in common for building community, they have been spelt out already in the Kyoto Declaration and were highlighted once again at Louvain. These should be reflected upon constantly and together for deepening our oneness and solidarity and for strengthening our religious commitment to the service of man and the community.

Since living a life in community starts at the grassroots level, we should make sure that local groups are started everywhere and that they reflect the dimensions that make for community at all levels. One facet of this to be stressed everywhere is a more just and genuine quality of life for human individuals—for persons and the family—and a sense of loyalty to the whole of mankind. The focus must continue to be man and wholeness of life for him wherever he may be.

In this age of rapid travel and communication through satellite, common interests and aspirations are growing. The media could themselves contribute to the cause. The chances of passing from physical togetherness to spiritual and moral oneness are improving all the time at least for those who see "from the hid battlements of eternity" and continue to struggle together in hope. Speaking of this coming together of our hearts, in mutual understanding, esteem and love, the late Pope Paul VI had some pertinent suggestions to offer members of all faiths during the Bombay Eucharistic Congress in 1964: "We must find the concrete and practical ways of organization and cooperation so that all resources be pooled and all efforts united towards achieving a true communion among all nations. Such a nation cannot be built on universal terror or the fear of mutual destruction: it must be built on a common love that embraces all and has its roots in God who is love."

THE SPECIFIC THRUST OF WCRP

From the very outset the alumni of WCRP have been associated with a supportive, common enterprise of world-building at the economic, social, cultural and political levels but inspired by their beliefs, and ultimate attitudes to life. At Kyoto they discussed human rights, development and disarmament. This living dialogue has built up a relationship and an interaction between people and not between belief-systems. We have engaged in a dialogue of conversation and cooperation, a means of sensitizing people of various back-grounds to each other and through this to the common concerns of mankind.

Religious dialogue does not necessarily mean that two persons speak about their religious experiences, but rather that

they speak as religiously committed persons with their ultimate commitments and religious outlook on subjects of common interest. As one of the speakers put it at Kyoto: "The religionists assembled here are, in fact, contributing to a very definite concept of religion and to a new concept of fellowship. The new—and prescriptive—concept of religion implies that whatever else religion may be (and here a great variety of opinion and approach is possible), it loses its authenticity and credibility if it ignores its social responsibility. And social responsibility today means, among other things, peace, human rights and development."

WCRP continues to be an exercise in applied religion. It relates ethical and spiritual insights to man's crucial problems today, trying to create a unity of conscience or, if you prefer, a universal conscience around the basic convictions shared by all living faiths and in respect of each other's rights and duties in full understanding of the just demands of the individual, the community, the state and the international order. Our goals is not just a better ordered human society, better structures, but rather creating the kind of relationships that would make for a healthier "community" at all levels.

SHARPENING OUR FOCUS

Implicit in the above approach is religion's role as a comprehensive integrating force. It enables man to feel at home in the wide universe, in society and in history. It produces in man strong, penetrating and persisting moods and motivations. It helps towards the 'totality' of meaning of our human existence and has something to do with the experience of ultimate meaning. What ultimately is at stake in nature and history is the salvation or wholeness of man both as individual and in society. However, for religion to exercise its integrating power, yet another of its functions has to come into play, viz., withdrawal from the fray, or "withdrawal and return" as Arnold Toynbee would have it, in order to get to the root of things that are happening. This is meditation or contemplation or silent reflection, call it what you will. If we bring ourselves to do it together, so much the better. Schumacher's "A Guide for the Perplexed" insists that unless we recognize the vital

importance of this "*inner work*" and structure our socio-economic edifice and our very way of life around this realization, our human and social problems will remain "unsolved and seemingly insoluble even as our efforts to solve them become ever more frantic." We know how to think but badly need to become masters of the thinking process, to "order thoughts around", i.e., to direct attention at will, the first and most difficult step in "inner work" especially for people of an activist milieu. Nevertheless, it is the starting point in our ability to operate with senses other than the physical, the opening up of "the third eye" which William Johnson describes as the "inner eye of love". Only so do we gain access to what is invisible to the physical eyes, for instance, the relationships that exist between people and which matter so much for the building of community. We live in a humanity of appearances, whereas "life is a drama of the visible and the invisible". Maurice Nicoll reminds us that "all our thoughts, emotions, feelings, imaginations, reveries, dreams, fantasies are invisible." All that belongs to our scheming, planning, secrets, ambitions, all our hopes, fears, doubts, perplexities, all our affections, speculations, pondering, vacuities, likes, dislikes aversions, attractions, loves and hates—all are themselves invisible. They constitute 'oneself'."

We do not realize that we are in a world of invisible people. Bringing the visible *and* the invisible into the realm of our vision is the function of the inner eye. The final stage in this process of human transformation of *any* human being is the complete replacement of self or ego by selflessness and pure love. Changes in the "system" are dobtless to be effected, but the "egos" of the system-changers come in the way of their laudable objectives and breed oppressions and fratricide even within the ranks of the do-gooders themselves. It is one of religion's urgent tasks to bring home to the men of today that objectivity in human affairs can only be achieved through the ability to see the "invisibilia" and work towards changing the inner core of man. Schumacher's plea for appropriate technology in 'Small is Beautiful" received wide acceptance. Now physical scientists and psychologists are beginning to confirm from their clinical findings that we have been using only one part of our brain—that designed for logical and analytical

thinking; whereas we have left untapped the right-hemisphere-capabilities of the brain—those that give a "holistic" or "all-at-once" intuition of reality. By bringing the necessity of "inner work" more into the limelight, and making it a going concern, WCRP will be making a significant contribution to the work of social scientists and peace-makers; it will be giving a new direction to society; it will be bringing science and religion together, even as it may provide people everywhere with an easily available tool to deal with the many fundamental questions which they are constantly asking themselves and which have been evaded by most, if not all, educational systems. There is no gainsaying that "inner work" is part of the answer to the search for meaning and purpose even as it is a sure way to inner peace and harmony.

FROM "INNER WORK" TO EXTERNAL ACTION (ELEMENTS FOR A NEW VISION)

History teaches us that the instruments of social change have rarely been persons who have achieved a lot, but rather persons who came up with powerful ideas which made their impact on the things people do and on the life-styles they lead. The balance of ideas and practice makes an explosive combination. A new vision applied to the processes taking place in our society is a must. In so doing, we need to strike a balance between inner peace and a serious confrontation with the powers at work in society. The tension has to be made creative. The impasse in current world affairs, as evidenced for instance at Unctad V, poses the question: "Why the recurring failure? What are the hidden forces that always seem to win out?

THE IDOLATRY OF WEALTH

It is no secret that the society dominating the world today has been built on the concept of *growth*. Every year there must be more than the preceding one—more cars, T.V., frigidaires—and everything else. Obsessed with growth, it becomes imperative for this society to *create needs*, even artificial ones, and this provides an endless field day to the advertising agencies. One would have hoped that there would be a ceiling on quantitative

growth, a sort of plateau, but the rule seems to be "what technology can do, it shall do". This is a form of idolatry of of wealth and it inevitably breeds poverty. Growth without control can be most damaging to some of the most defenceless people in the world as, for example, the mercury poisoning of North American Indians and the destruction of their livelihood by a British company in Canada. Another example is the long-term hazard of the development of nuclear energy. Harrisburg and Skylab are grim reminders. It is not that the things produced are bad; it is that good things are sought out of context. The very processes that make some affluent condemn others in the same human community to inadequacy, poverty and destitution. Basically it is not a matter of money. Rather, it raises the much more fundamental question: Are we going to use our expertise, technology, research and power mainly to develop goods and services as we have done to date or are they to be re-directed towards solving human problems and ministering to human needs?

THE SOCIAL USES OF PROPERTY

Probing still further, the next question in this context is: What do we understand by ownership? Property, ownership and land are at the very roots of the way society deals with people. What does it mean for a thing to be mine? Or for a house to belong to somebody? The ideas we have inherited on this matter probably need to be revised. We have tended to stress the individual over against the society he lives in; we have privatised ownership; and we have done the same with freedom. A free society now seems to mean—telling everyone: "Now, get on, and do whatever you like and we shall try and supply the means for you to do it." This is the kind of individual freedom which has nothing to do with belonging to a social whole or to a community. It is time we liberated ourselves from such attitudes if we want to make a meaningful contribution towards the solution of the problem. "Man ought to possess external things, not as his own but as common, in such a way, that is, that he is ready to communicate them to others in need." (Thomas Aquinas: ST.; 11/11/66 art 2).

All private ownership has a communal reference before it

has a private one. We need to regain this vision of the meaning of ownership, property and possession. We are not absolute masters and freeholders, but administrators or tenants, trustees if you like, responsible to the Maker for the personal and social uses to which we put the possessions we have inherited or amassed. This was Gandhi's philosophy in a nutshell. The Qur'an makes it quite clear to the rich that in their wealth there is the acknowledged right for the needy and the destitute.

QUALITIES FOR THE TASK

Putting such thinking into practice and maintaining inner peace is not likely to be plain sailing. The balance may by struck if we recognize first the presence of injustice in our society starts within *self*; that we need to free ourselves from the processes of society and do the same for the organizations, also religious, with which we are associated. This means shedding from our lives the very things which dominate our society; acquisitiveness, consumerism and lack of concern for people.

Secondly, we need to go beyond wanting to help people to wanting to identify with them. Thirdly, we need endless patience and courage to stay with our creative vision through thick and thin. And, lastly, we need the modesty to recognize that we shall only be able to do a limited amount of good and not change the entire structure of society. Every generation must make its own journey towards Peace. (cfr. Gullinan: *The Roots of Social Injustice*; London, 1973).

SOME PARALLEL REMEDIAL MEASURES

It is common knowledge that we are not getting at the root causes of injustice and, therefore, must not exclude from our concern the relief and welfare demanded in the meantime. After all it is people that matter most and in the end it is only people that matter.

Though some described Unctad V as a fiasco, Mr Gamani Corea's assessment was that "it had initiated a significant process that cannot but gather strength in the direction of a restructuring of the world economy". Be that as it may, the vision outlined above could provide a good backdrop for the

struggle towards a redistribution of power based on justice and participation which is at the heart of the proposed new international economic order and all the re-structuring it envisages.

But we must have no illusions. The west does not seem to be in a great mood for self-sacrifice. On the contrary, it seems to be losing interest in bridging the gap between North and South and is growing more anxious than ever about growth in national economies.

All the talk about "peace with justice" or "eco-development" would make sense, particularly if the four are taken together, provided the structural problem or political, as many would say, gets adequate attention.

TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE

What is the alternative? What, in fact, is the next stage or rather the simultaneous plan of action called for? Should not the emphasis in *Centre-Periphery relations* shift from discussions about flows of trade, technology, money and finances to *Self-Reliance*? This means that developing countries would gain total control over their own economic activity and de-link themselves from Centre-dominated economic cycles. This would also imply ownership over their natural resources, processing them and that too for consumption predominantly in the developing world. If not in the first round, then later, the processing of their raw materials should be directed more towards the needs of the masses. This is not against the concept of trade, but rather trying to produce a product locally instead of getting it through buying and selling.

Simultaneously, the movement for *collective self-reliance* should grow, with a general decline in vertical trade and a general increase in horizontal trade. This is beginning to receive attention not only among the non-aligned, but also in Eastern Europe vis-a-vis the hegemony of Soviet Russia. However, decrease in dependency on the USA, the EEC, Japan and Russia is not going to be viewed kindly and is likely to produce repercussions which could prove harmful, to put it mildly. But, ultimately, *self-reliant growth* is the only answer and in fact should have been and should be even now at the heart of all efforts at international cooperation in any field

whatsoever. This is the meaning of sharing within the one single human community, namely, providing a setting in which people can have a say over their own affairs; helping to bring about conditions in which local self-reliance could unfold itself. (Galtung, Transnational Perspectives; 1976, vol. III.)

REMOVING DESTITUTION

Trying to "close the gap" between the rich and poor nations was never a feasible goal. It has proved a frustrating and useless objective. So now, given the present stalemate and the current mood, a more realistic target would be to focus on the elimination of *destitution* from the face of the earth by the year 2000. The nations seem to be in agreement over giving priority attention to the more severely affected countries and, if they can be got to commit themselves to this as a common obligation reaching beyond all national frontiers and power structures, this could well provide a fresh start for the last two decades of the century. In the above proposal the focus is not on developed and developing, rich and poor, industrialized or agro-based economies, but a convergence together of all nations on man and the human needs of the marginalized masses of humanity. This is in conformity with the "*basic needs*" approach of the World Employment Conference of 1975. It would focus on employment as the major instrument for meeting the "core" basic needs of the poor—namely food, shelter, health and education, so that every citizen of the world has a more dignified way of life by the end of the century. I would like to add: "A basic-needs-oriented policy implies the participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them through organizations of their own choice." (ILO, Geneva, Follow-up of the World Employment Conference; Basic Needs; 1979). An economic order, new or otherwise, can only be relevant and lead to peace when it is based on real human needs, limited wants and self-reliant members in society. Concern and compassion should, therefore, be directed, and practical means devised not so much with the focus on GNP but rather on the unique value of each individual and a better way of life in the human family.

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MAN AND THE FAMILY OF MAN

As the debate on human rights and disarmament advances, as humanity is gradually maturing, it is becoming increasingly clear that attitudes, policies and programmes on these matters are determined by one's vision and philosophy of life concerning man and his destiny and by one's thinking on war and peace.

Human rights as a concept has been accepted but as a movement it has not been very successful. In fact human rights have been observed in the breach in most countries. A people's background, culture, religious philosophy, political system have much to do with its perception of human rights.

In so-called democratic countries there is a notable consciousness and awareness of the individual, his dignity and his fundamental freedom and rights. However, the human rights of the poor and underprivileged, the worker and the racially or ethically different, as a social group or class, do not receive the same measure of attention—to say the least. In socialist countries, the opposite holds true. The collectivity gets greater attention, whereas the individual's rights, dignity and freedom are heavily curtailed, if not impaired.

Gandhi pinpointed the reason: "The State is soulless, unresponsive to love, and never likely to be stripped of its coercive power to which it owes its existence." (Bose, Selections from Gandhi, 1948). The State should serve man, and society should hold the State continually responsible for the welfare of the individual. Societies become corrupt when men are passive and listless in the face of untruth and violence.

Human rights are prior to all legislation; if they are enshrined in legal code, then all the better. But they do not depend on any man-made laws or ordinances. As the author of "The Fantasy of Human Rights" states so well: Human rights are what people are entitled to—not what society or the state may be willing to give. They belong to people because they are people; are prior to citizen rights and are valid even against government, state or military regime. They travel with people. Immigrants do not leave their basic human rights in their country of origin—a point forcibly made in Pope John's famous letter *Pacem in Terris*.

To discover why this is so, we must go back to man and his dignity as a person. In a leading article in "The Times" of 6th April 1977, the writer argued: "To speak of a person's liberty, life and security as his or her right is in fact a curious legalistic formulation. What we really want to protect is not the person's rights but the *person himself*." U. Thant put it very well when he said: "The dignity and worth of the *human person* should be the working principle of human existence."

Pointing out that we have much to learn from some tribal societies where people are valued, not for what they achieve but because they are there, President Kaunda adds that, "the test of civilisation is the way society treats its old people and, indeed, all its members who are not useful or productive." Tagore had written wisely many years ago about the underlying reason: "The permanent significance of home is not in the narrowness of its enclosure, but in the eternal moral idea. It represents the truth of human relationship; it reveals loyalty and love for the personality of man."

Hamlet was neither ernest nor sarcastic when, briefly casting half an eye on man's nature, he spluttered: "How noble in reason. . . . In action how like an angel." All religions are at one in extolling man's *dignity* and the *sanctity of human life*, whether they describe him as sacred and inviolable, or made to the image and likeness of God, or as heaven-born reason, or God's vice-regent upon earth, or a child of immortality, entitled to honour, attention and respect. They are in agreement that all men are equal and that "all within the four seas are brothers". Some go further and find no meaning in human rights unless they are related to transcendental values; true brotherhood can be established only by virtue of mankind's relationship with one another through God.

By the same token, this leads to the conclusion that nationalism and nation-state thinking are not broad enough to encompass the master ideas of one humanity, of world unity and interdependence which are a necessary prerequisite for human rights. We are *planetary society*, one single human community; our greatest loyalty is to the human family. Lesser loyalties are not excluded, they are complementary to each other. The interests of mankind are prior to any part of it. This is what Ivo Duchbacek means when he claims that

"territorial nationalism must be submerged by the irresistible tide of universalism". The survival and liberty of the individual are essentially connected with the liberty and well-being of all peoples. The link is well brought out in the oft-quoted words of John Donne: "No man is an island, entire of itself. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Person and community go together and it is futile to dream of a new world community unless the people within it grow themselves, and they in turn cannot advance unless the community respects and upholds the worth and dignity of the human person. As in a family, the emphasis must be not so much on rights and duties but on a sense of belonging, oneness and togetherness. The focus must be on affection and concern, the weaker and less-endowed securing the greatest measure of attention. Such an attitude could do wonders for the family of man.

War and peace are not isolated problems that can be dealt with piecemeal. We are indivisible as a people. The brotherhood of man is more important than the brotherhood of nations. All wars begin in the minds and hearts of men. The weapons of destruction are in their hands. To mention only one sector: We would all want to endorse one of the conclusions of the meeting of scientists and theologians held last July at Cambridge (Mass): "We grieve that so many able scientists, especially the young ones, are seduced away from the nobler aspirations of science into the unwilling service of mutual destruction." If men refuse to entertain the thought of violence and decide to repudiate from within themselves the desire and wanton inclination to do harm or injustice to their fellow human beings, at any level of life, from the family to the comity of nations, then and only then will order, justice and peace become the pattern of our dynamic, ongoing march into the future. This is the basis and rationale for "transarmament", the transition, namely, from a military defence system to a non-violent one.

CONCLUSION

We are at a turning point in history. The signs of the headlong race towards destruction and death are there for all to see. There is urgent need to act and bring others into the movement for life and wholeness of life for man and for all mankind. The entire human community is finally coming together. The challenge of our time is for the unification of mankind. There is a world to be built and we must muster the resources for the enterprise, nothing less than the entire human and spiritual experience of mankind.

Inasmuch as WCRP is world-wide and multi-religious, and by that very fact also multi-cultural and multi-racial it seems to be unmistakably demanded by the exigencies of the times. The nameless millions of the poor and lowly appeal to us not to falter but to go forward in undaunted hope. It is a summons we cannot ignore—to live, to think, to love on a planetary scale and to rally as many as possible of all living faiths not so much for an economy of plenty as for a civilization of truth and justice, of freedom and love, leading to peace for each and all.

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The Role of Religion in a New International Economic Order

World economic policy is to a large extent governed by world politics. Even when the security aspects of a situation are in question, it is the maintenance and improvement of economic structures that generally attract attention. The importance of a well-functioning international monetary system was recognized in the thirties when Sterling went off gold in the wake of world-wide depression. By the same token, even before the end of the Second World War, the foundations were laid for the Bretton Woods agreement which was in operation thereafter for a quarter of a century. "It functioned satisfactorily," says Dr Franz Ullrich, "as long as the conduct of the nations dominating world trade was in step with the construction of that international monetary system. When the two no longer coincided, the whole system collapsed."

The stored-up inequities of the past decades came to the fore especially in 1972 when dollar prices of internationally traded goods rose abruptly from 5 per cent in 1969-71 to 7½ in 1972 and nearly 30 per cent from the autumn of 1972 to that of 1973, well before the explosion of petroleum prices. If inflation remained a national phenomenon until about 1968, the

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Keynote Address at the Inter-Religious Consultation at Geneva Park, Ontario, Canada, on 7th November 1975.

international monetary system was responsible, at least in part, for the extension thereafter of fiscal permissiveness to the international monetary institutions and policies. As a result, for the first time in thirty years the dream of unfailing plenty was called in question because of international recession, galloping inflation and serious imbalances in world trade and payments.

The action of the OPEC countries, with all its ambiguities, has doubtless had a dramatic effect on the world economy; it must be seen to have historical significance. Nevertheless, it must also be acknowledged that the most devastating balance-of-payments disruptions and world inflation ever experienced in mankind's history preceded and contributed to the explosion of all prices. Whether the oil problem is solved or not, the effects of 200 years of unprecedented material production, together with an annual bill of well ever 200 billion dollars for military expenditures will continue to be felt for many a year to come in growing shortage of crucial industrial and agricultural resources.

The economy is for the benefit of man but it has failed to meet even the basic needs of the masses of the world, bestowing its benefits meanwhile on a privileged minority. Nearly five centuries of colonial control have helped to give one-quarter of the world's people three-fourths of the world's income investment and services and almost all of the world's research. Such a structural imbalance within the "existing order" or rather "disorder" has, not surprisingly, resulted in a world-wide crisis even in essential goods and services and notably in the three basic needs of food, fertilizer and fuel.

Ineffective economic co-operation over the years, disillusionment with the endless stream of resolutions which never resulted in action, pointed to the urgent need for the reform of international institutions, especially in the area of production, marketing and distribution. The disarray has generated world fear and insecurity, even while it has stirred up hopes of a better deal.

In effect, we are faced with a crisis of human solidarity, all the more poignant at a time when mankind has proved beyond doubt its unequalled mastery of the universe.

Today's problem is not mainly the lack of physical

resources but of economic and social mismanagement and misuse, the lack of political will to deliver the goods. The call for a new economic order came from a Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly of the U.N. convened at the request of Algeria. Its Declaration, Plan of action and Special Programme started the ball rolling. In quick succession followed the conferences of the "77" at Dakar and Algiers and that of Unido at Lima, not to mention the Cocoyoc Symposium of "Patterns of Resource Use, Environment and Development Strategies." The two Unctad Board Meetings were also very much in the same line.

These conferences have a set of components more or less common to all of them which constitute the basis for the new order. Along with the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of nations, they provided the seedbed for the Seventh Special Session of U.N. held two months ago.

Against this background and in the interest of better international development co-operation, the session was asked to discuss and act upon a comprehensive report on the state of international economic activities, the constraints affecting the international Develoment Strategy as well as the structural changes needed in the United Nations system.

In this chapter, we will be examining critically international economic structures not because we are primarily concerned with the economic order as such, but because a consciousness that is motivated by religious concern will naturally want to ensure that social justice and human solidarity transcend considerations are limited only to economic efficiency and market rationality. In the transformation of existing international economic relationships, religion has to play an important role in providing a moral vision that will ensure a more human life for all people.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

The essence of the "new order" is the demand of the developing countries for "full and complete economic emancipation," for full and active participation on the basis of complete equality of all countries in solving world economic problems in the common interest of all countries. The cornerstone is to be

equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, recognition of common interest and need of co-operation among governments. The shift of economic power to determine who gets what is the real heart of the proposed scheme. In the first place, insistence is laid on more control by the Third world of its resources, including contiguous seas, seabeds and their subsoils. The next step, is the demand for a better livelihood from exploitation of these, chiefly through a fair and stable return, through trade. To ensure this fair and stable return price indexation is seen as a demand of justice. As inflation pushes up the prices of industrial goods, prices of raw materials must rise correspondingly.

One way envisaged for effecting this shift of power is the extension, hopefully, of producers' associations on the lines of OPEC. The new approach is intended to strengthen the bargaining position of poorer countries, more economic activity among themselves, and an effort to "rely first and foremost on themselves".

Going beyond a piecemeal approach to a more comprehensive one, emphasis is placed on the right of nations to control and expropriate foreign-owned property and enterprises in accordance with national laws. Also envisaged is the transfer of real resources to developing countries and a "code of conduct for the transfer of technology". Last comes the demand for the restructuring of many international institutions and the re-arranging of the world monetary and financial system.

The political implications of the proposals were laid bare by the Prime Minister of Jamaica: "At the heart of the problem of a new world economic order lies two issues: Firstly, how does the political leadership in the developed world convey to its internal political constituency the need for the kind of material accommodation which must be made if we are to commence the assault upon those wide disparities. Secondly, and perhaps this is more subtle, is the problem of political leadership accepting a re-definition of the exercise of sovereignty. . . ." "Answers to these problems will only be found within the framework of a perceived global ethic, whether arrived at by a moral or programmatic route."

Most of the programme of the proposed new order covers

old ground. However, it would be new if the objectives were realized. For then world economic power and profit would be more equitably shared, trade would no longer be ruled by the market forces of the rich industrial nations; industrialisation would shift more in favour of developing countries; there would be fairer terms of trade thanks to price indexation and large and more stable earnings from export trade.

What would also be new, is the great degree of self-reliance not to say self-confidence built into the plan and to be brought to realisation by producers' co-operatives and the building of buffer stocks through trade surpluses of some developing countries.

The new order would put an end to the era of pious resolutions of goodwill and situate the economic relationship between developed and developing countries within the framework of a *binding code* as part of a process toward international economic justice. The shift would certainly be new, as also the note of equality in the joint partnership envisaged in the undertaking.

The oft-repeated theme of all the recent U.N. Conference on Environment, Population, Food, Law of the seas and women would then occupy pride of place: *no true development is possible without a significant reshaping of the structural relationships between rich and poor countries.*

REACTIONS

The growth of the world economy since the Second World War has been unprecedented. Understandably, therefore, some argue for the preservation of the existing system of free enterprise based on open and expanding trade; free movements of investment, capital and technology; readily available supplies of raw materials and institutions and practices of international co-operation. The failure of the system, however, has been exposed in the uneven distribution of income between States and within countries, increasing destruction of environment and a threatening scarcity of resources, caused by unlimited exploitation. Such fundamental problems can hardly be dealt with by marginal adjustments.

The Dutch Prime Minister has shown that, apart from the

above liability, the system is not as free as it is made out to be. He concludes his analysis as follows: "The choice, therefore, before us is between a system which is largely guided and manipulated for the benefit of the rich countries and one directed towards solving the problems of division of income and property, of scarcity of natural resources and of the despoiled environment."

In spite of their efforts for objectivity, some policy-makers of the developed world are resentful of the way they feel they are being pushed around by the "77". "Liberal sentiments", they say, "are all very well when they are paid for with your surplus wealth. It is different when developing countries actually cut into your standard of living". Grappling with development issues in face of a public opinion that could easily and soon reject the whole concept and, having to carry the "consenting body" of tax-payers along with them, they are inclined to view the transition from development assistance to a new international economic order as "development by revolution instead of by reformism". Some fear that this might shatter the view that development means peace. They concede it does in the sense that distributive justice would remove the cause of conflict, but, to quote Noel Salter: "the road thither lies over men's bodies; as it did in our nation states".

That is an honest expression of feeling, but, it is being realistically recognized in most industrialized countries, especially of Western Europe, that in fact and psychology things are not going to continue as before.

And a good thing too, the developing countries would chime in, as, only so, are there any chances of redressing existing injustices between rich and poor countries.

The basic assumption of the present system has been that the development of the Third World countries would result from an integration into the world economic system. Experience has shown that this has not been the case. On the contrary, the system increased dependence, and reduced self-reliance; it induced countries into producing not what they needed but what would serve the rich market industrial countries.

One dramatic result that has surfaced with the oil crisis,

itself a consequence of the imbalances, is that the Third World has been split into Third and Fourth Worlds. The latter have no oil, no currency reserves, heavy indebtedness and often famine expectancy as well.

Fortunately, all nations are at one in recognizing the very urgent need of these MSA (most severely affected) countries and are prepared to contribute to an Emergency Fund for the purpose. There is united opinion that if the Fourth World went bankrupt it could set in motion a downward trend of collapsing markets comparable with 1929.

Developing countries contend that it is, therefore, a matter of self-interest and of course interdependence for all countries to usher in a new economic order. A new system of evaluation is needed of resources, skills, products. This is not only to avoid the neo-colonialism of one country subordinating the economic life of other to its own purposes, but also to put an end to what the eco-spasm report calls "a super colonialism in which national economies (also in the highly advanced industrialised world) are subordinate not to other nations but to the workings of a transnational economic system or network over which they have no control".

And so the search continues towards convergence on principles and further steps forward are taken towards evolving a consensus on a new international economic order. This may be deduced also from the U.N. document adopted at the Seventh Special Session which concluded its deliberation on 16th September 1975.

SEARCH FOR CONSENSUS

The goals of "the new order" are gradually coming to be seen as legitimate: the shift of power over their own resources more into the hands of the developing countries; the stabilization of prices through buffers; indexation to sustain terms of trade; much more industrialization; countervailing power through producers' associations and other forms of Third World co-operation.

Planetary bargaining may not serve as the ideal of social order, but, the industrialized countries, with a keen sense of realism, have recognized the legitimacy of this approach, even

while they continue to dispute some of its components. It should be borne in mind that it is only some features of the "new international economic order" that the B-group challenge.

These continue to be, mainly, nationalization without "prompt and full compensation according to international law and existing trade agreements"; producers' associations; the highly controversial point of indexation and the Plan's proposals on debt cancellation, trade promotion and monetary liquidity.

The issues as we have seen go for beyond economic considerations. The crisis in industrial countries has threatened the stability of institutions and the fabric of their cooperation on the range of political and security problems. It has weakened their ability to act with purpose.

On the other hand, the conceptual shortcomings, political weakness and poor performance of current development strategy have bred disenchantment in the ranks of the developing countries and damaged the credibility of most industrialized countries.

The upshot of these trends and pressures is that the world will never be the same again. Something irreversible has been set in motion. The issues raised at the Sixth Special Session have a certain inexorable quality about them. A new order is already struggling to be born; "it is a phenomenon, not just a slogan", the crisis of the old system can also be the opportunity of the new. It can be seen a threat and lead to further confrontation and angry disputes or it can be a moment of truth rallying all together to render more meaningful the interdependence of nations.

The basic question is that formulated already by Luis Echeverria, the President of Mexico: "*either co-operation or world chaos*, for solutions involving containment by force are not only unjust but impractical in the present state of the new balance of power". In the words of the Dag Hammarkjold 1975 Report: "the challenge is to set in motion the process of change; to achieve a turning point".

A WIDER HORIZON

Since the Sixth Session there has been at national and international levels a breadth and diversity of consultations unparalleled in history. At this critical juncture when humanity is at the crossroads, it is in the fitness of things that men of living faiths, with a viewpoint stemming from "the hid battlements of eternity" should also join in assisting the formulation of the goals, the content and direction, the machinery and quality of the patterns, "the web of this world that is being woven out of necessity and change" for our "only earth." The rationale for a new international economic order goes or should go beyond mere economic considerations. It is the ture welfare, happiness and destiny of each man, the whole man and all men that are at stake. The restructuring of a just economic order cannot be left to caprice, the market mechanism or blind change.

All who believe in God would want to insist that the exigencies of their faith demand that acceptable solutions should go beyond self interest and be based on international social justice and human solidarity. In fact, they would hope that the present exercise would ultimately transcend the "economic" towards the creation of a new "social" and "human" world order.

Reshaping the economic relationships among nations so that they may serve better each country's development is good especially for the new nations for whom nationhood must remain a top priority until they can take their rightful place in the world community. But a long term strategy would envisage not an "international" but a "world" order, in the making of which the resources of creation in the wide sense of that term, would be seen as given by God to mankind, to the family of nations for the use and enjoyment of all through, a wise and responsible stewardship. In such a global vision, the poor and their needs would be seen as those of one single family, with burdens to be equitably shared. The acceptance of this concept would include some form of world taxation and world authority for a shared use and care of global resources. It is within such a framework that the quest for the brotherhood of man and for world peace becomes truly meaningful,

though admittedly elusive. "Our reach should be beyond our grasp of what's a heaven for"!

TRANSITIONAL STRATEGY

For a realistic attack on the problem and a positive stance vis-a vis a new international economic order; I would like to draw your attention to the Cocoyoc Declaration. It emanated from a Conference in Mexico sponsored, not by the non-aligned, but by Unctad and the U.N. Secretariate for Environment and Development. Its analysis of the gap between rich and poor lands is more in terms of the failure of market mechanisms and much less in terms of domination. It adds to this market analysis, however, the disastrous effects on the poor nations of world inflation which trebled the prices of foods, fertilizers and manufactured goods. Cocoyoc could be commended as a possible bridge between divergent approaches even though it fully endorses the Sixth Special Session and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties as steps "in the right direction." It goes further when it stresses the need to work towards "a new, more co-operative and equitable international economic order." This would be geared to satisfying the basic needs of the poorest; be characterized by global management of resources and care of the environment but within a framework of sovereign, national control over resources.

Cocoyoc specifically suggests that the common patrimony of the resources of the ocean with its minerals and oil be extended to cover a maximum area of the earth's waters. An international authority would explore, process and distribute these resources for the benefit of the world's neediest. Vessels crossing these common waters would be taxed. This tax would constitute the first step toward an eventual world tax which, together with savings from disarmament, would replace development assistance.

The following ten points from the 1975 Hammarskjold Report offer different degrees of political feasibility. They map out succinctly the filed of the possible:

1. Place the satisfaction of needs—beginning with the eradication of poverty—at the focal points of the development process.

2. Strengthen Third World capacity for self-reliant development.
3. Transform social economic and political structures.
4. Increase the availability of and access to foodstuffs.
5. Reorient science and technology towards another development.
6. Improve public information.
7. Redefine the policies of international resource transfers and ensure their automatic financing.
8. Establish a world authority to manage mankind's common heritage.
9. Adapt the United Nations system to new requirements.
10. The need to be able to appeal.

BUTTRESSING THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

"The area of a New Order", as a delegate pointed out at the Sixth Session, has meaning only if we fully understand that we must all work at achieving it, our task being to use "reason and conciliation to contain the selfish inclinations of our very nature". Examples in the life of youth groups, religious communities and the collective gestures of Christian people point to the growing realization that a greater spirit of prayer and simplicity of life-style is more in conformity with the message of gospel or for that matter of any world religion. This means moving towards some concept of "enoughness" so that energies, imagination and passion can be turned away from excessive consumption and superfluous needs towards some more meaningful aspects of personal growth and social well-being.

Increased public awareness on both counts, minimum and maximum living standards through programmes of education for justice and wholeness of life seem indicated at all levels.

Dialogue among men of living faiths, along the lines of this Consultation, must continue so that a unity of conscience is created on the practical issues that could bring about significant changes. The specific suggestions of the Seventh Special Session could receive such treatment, e.g. implementing the U.N. target for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent without further delay and raising it to at least 1 per cent by

1981. So too a planned effort to have the petroleum exporting countries siphon substantial capital flows to developing countries on concessionary terms. To the extent that multinationals are the key to re-stabilizing the global economy, an enlightened and sustained dialogue with them is also in order. This would be the exercise of religion's prophetic role and a sign of "shalom" in an increasingly militarized world.

So too the spirit of real religion would require identifying with the poor, the weak and the oppressed. The rural poor of the world and the city masses and underprivileged workers constitute roughly 70 per cent of mankind. It is from their perspective and condition that we should take our starting point. Inasmuch as and to the extent that the "77" are their spokesmen, the "new international economic order" should be gladly studied in depth and discerned in the spirit so that co-operation may overcome confrontation through the re-discovery of the essential values of human solidarity and the base may be laid for a more just and more human social order as a harbinger of a genuine world community.

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The Role of the Church in Development

I. THE WORLD OF TODAY

Billions who "exist" in our world of today—they don't live—lack the simplest preconditions of human dignity—food, shelter, health, education, work, hope.

Here is a graphic but poignant description by Leonard Hurst: "She was a hungry peasant, and she knew she would soon be dead. The truth did not occur to her that she was yet another victim of conditions that make life a travesty for hundreds of millions of people over large areas of the earth. She was just another bit of humanity beaten by an intolerable state of affairs that denies human dignity, enthrones squalor, makes daily work a burden instead of a joy, turns sleep into a diseased respite and finally skills the very will to live. She is the human challenge to the peoples and governments of the world, and to the Christian Church to grapple with one of the greatest problems of the day—the problem of world hunger.

LIABILITIES

She is not alone. According to recent statistics which are

Delivered at the Ecumenical Conference on "Action for World Development" at Sydney, Australia, in February 1970.

as "thorough as the present data will allow", the proportion actually hungry and undernourished is probably somewhere between 10 and 15 per cent, i.e. between 300 and 500 million people—a figure approximately equal to the combined populations of the United States and Soviet Union, and four or five times as great as the combined populations of Britain and France. Lord Boyd Orr maintained that "hunger is more dangerous than the atom-bomb for the future of the human race."

As far back as 1952, Gunnar Myrdal described the vicious circle: "People are ill because they are poor; they become even poorer because they are ill, and accumulated poverty engenders in its turn more sickness". The poet Auden comments:

"Hunger allows no choice to the citizen or to the police;
We must love one another or die."

Malnutrition is a more serious threat to mankind than hunger and it may be useful to remind ourselves that even when the commercial demand for food has been taken care of, that does not imply that nutritional needs are satisfied.

Childhood malnutrition tends to retard both physical and mental development, often irreparably. This might well be the case with millions of the 40 per cent of the population of developing countries which is under fifteen, and in a couple of decades this generation will have taken the place of their elders.

Along with this is the demoralizing spectre of unemployment and underemployment for millions, also among the educated, who want work and desire it desperately. This stubborn problem hardly receives adequate attention.

Nor is the refugee nightmare—oftener than not a man-made disaster—a credit to political sagacity! As for that other skeleton in the human cupboard, the bogey of migration, the less said about it the better—or should we not face up to it sooner rather than later?

Half the children of the world have no chance of *education* and far more than half over the age of ten have never been to school. In the field of formal education the gap between "haves" and "have-nots" is even wider than the food gulf. There are 700 million illiterates. It is said that until at least fifty per cent of the population of a developing country is

literate, the achievement of self-sustaining growth will be extremely difficult. In this area lies the greatest challenge, especially if education is to be made less urban-oriented.

The situation is further compounded by historial factors like "rapid urbanization in a context of obdurate underdevelopment".

In the 19th century urbanization was a contributory factor to rising income and modernization. In developing countries on the other hand *export cities* grew up ahead of any planned or systematic movement towards modernization. Rio, Calcutta, Shanghai to quote a few examples, were used largely for the despatch of primary materials from mines and plantations to Europe and North America and for the receipt and distribution of western manufactured goods. These cities were larger and ahead of the economy sustaining them.

Latin America for instance already in 1920 had as large a proportion of its urban population in cities of over 500,000 as Europe had after a century of full-scale modernization.

The *population explosion* has aggravated the tendency of cities in the developing world to outgrow the resources of the economies they are supposed to reflect and serve. This too, paradoxically enough, is partly due to lopsided world cooperation, the conquest of major epidemics and grosser forms of contamination ahead of a full-scale diversification of the economy. Longer life expectancy stemming from improved public health is in the main responsible for the increase, even though there is some evidence of rising birth-rates in some areas.

If more than a fourth of the 4 billions projected as world population for 1980 are likely to be urban dwellers, nearly half of them would be in big cities in the developing world! The houses, the power-systems, the drains, the schools, the transport, the entire complex called for by urban living would have to be at least duplicated that by the end of the second development decade!!

From the *agricultural standpoint* we have another hurdle. The growth of industrial cities in Britain, Europe, America and later in Japan was preceded by decisive changes in the agricultural structure, productivity and food-production which created a vital surplus above subsistence levels. That has not happened in developing countries on a scale sufficient to meet

the challenge. In fact not all developing countries increased their food output as fast as their population. In some cases, per capita food production actually fell in the last decade. The recent very welcome breakthrough with hybrid grain, with improved fertilizer and better irrigation will no doubt change the pattern considerably, but hardly with any degree of finality. Already from the 1850s the percentage of people living in cities in developed countries like France, Norway, Switzerland has been much lower than the percentage of the working force in industry, whereas in most countries of Asia and Africa and in every Latin American Republic urbanization has marched ahead of industrialization. Such an imbalance naturally operates as a brake on the pace of development.

In North Africa, in India, in Latin America tens of thousands of rural immigrants take into the cities the habits, expectations and birth rates (at least for one generation) of village life. Whether as landless men on the fringe of the village or as jobless men in the inner city they live on the fringe of organized society and are no asset to the city itself in its creative role of modernizing the way of life.

Competitive industrialization today demands 50 or 60 times more capital than was needed a century ago. And on top of that the developing world's share in the export of manufactures is still under 10 per cent of the world's trade. The prospects of a change are far from bright as long as Atlantic, European and Japanese producers press home their advantage by tariff schedules that almost exclude imported manufactures. The pressures outlined above do not cancel each other out but conspire to create a very grim situation indeed.

There is no lack of money in the world for killing human beings, but we have not yet managed to get enough funds, together to keep them "alive". The total aid from all sources in 1966 was eleven billion dollars, really worth only half that, thanks, as usual, to adverse terms of trade. Between 1961 and 1966 the net transfer of resources from the DAC nations to the developing countries increased by only about five per cent (from 6,000 to 6,400 million dollars), while their own GNP grew about twenty-five per cent (or about 300,000 million dollars total). International trading trends are so one-sided that they tend to nullify the effects of international aid. Since

1960 assistance has been gradually tied to purchases in the donor country. In 1967 only 16 per cent of official assistance given remained untied. This is said to have reduced the real value of the assistance by at least 20 per cent. At the same time, expenditure of the order of 150,000 million dollars a year is considered normal for armaments (a thousand times the contribution of the nations towards the United Nations Development Programme), fifty million dollars on alcohol and five million on cosmetics in one country alone and a hundred times more on dog food than on the propagation of the faith!

Mankind is split in two: one part well-fed, well-endowed in every way; the other, by far the larger, sunk in wretchedness. And the gulf is widening every day. Pope Paul, among others, has pointed out the tragic inadequacy of present world efforts, of both short-and long-term programmes for international economic co-operation.

What is worse is that the iniquities are subtly perpetuated even without a conscious policy. This is also happening within nations and even developed ones at that. "In Britain for instance" as Hugh Kay indicates, "7 per cent of the population owns 84 per cent of the country's private wealth. The cost-of-living rises steeply, not in consumer durables, but in the things that hit the poor: food, rent, light and fuel; and two-thirds of the country's households have no refrigerator and no car. The dustman who goes on strike because his basic wage is below the levels of social security benefits is condemned for blackmailing the community, while property developers make their two or three hundred per cent profit, and nobody terms it unpatriotic. Vast new buildings are kept deliberately empty to allow for prices to appreciate, while thousands still live in slum or near-slum conditions; and, even in 1969, there are mothers, British and American, who have to chase the rats from their babies' costs".

The very effort against poverty, inequality and oppression meets with resistance, thanks to traditional stagnant social systems. There is a refusal, not always unconscious, to question fallacious values and there is the fear of losing face, indicating the need to improve men and not only systems. Where the idea of the concrete individual, the person, equality, independence, secularism, community is emerging and seeking

to forge ahead, often enough vested interests, corruption at all levels, a rash of political ideologies and a babel of economic policies conspire to slow the pace of change. The revolution of rising expectations, the mounting sense of human creativity, the heightened degree of mobility and dynamism are in striking contrast to the weak political will for human development which obtains at the moment. The performance of Unctad II at New Delhi is a good illustration.

Small wonder that a recent survey has discovered a correlation between violence on the one hand and underdevelopment and poverty on the other, between the vicious circle of poverty—malnutrition—disease--low productivity—poverty—and attempts to disrupt the existing social order, which in turn are often a major impediment to development.

Archbishop Helder Camara of Brazil makes a grim assessment when he writes: "If you open their eyes and if the structural changes are not being made fast enough, you are preparing a revolution. . . . For me the current situation is revolutionary. . . . I am not stating a position, I am stating reality".

ASSETS IN THE PRESENT SITUATION

But there are also some hopeful signs, and the first is a *growing awareness of this central problem* of our age, thanks in large measure to the modern means of social communication and the implicit belief in the equality of men, at least in their human dignity. This was very much in evidence all through the Second Vatican Council and has become a major preoccupation of the World Council of Churches. It is manifest, of course, in the increasing practical interest on the part of nations—some have a special ministry for development and perhaps others under pressure will follow suit—and especially in the constant efforts of the United Nations and its agencies. History will probably record as one of the greatest contributions of the United Nations, the creation, within a short span of twenty years, of an entirely new international approach towards world co-operation for development. Perhaps the most distinguishing favourable characteristic of the two decades which have passed since the Second World War, writes Cedric Day, has been the increasing range and scope of international

co-operation in science, in technology, and for lack of a better word, in "humanity".

In some developing countries there have been *significant breakthroughs*, for instance, in the agricultural sector, and some of the education policies of the past are providing an accumulation of skills which will raise production in the future. So too the "industrial giants" will begin to yield dividends. (Many of these intangibles are not always accounted for in "statistical data" deluging the world.)

But the future depends on the nations of the world—and whether they respond with passivity or bright and hopeful policy. The technical revolution in farming can, if fully financed and supported, produce the indispensable surplus in agriculture and all that an enlightened regional urban growth would call for. Without an urban infrastructure, the agricultural revolution will itself be slowed down.

The most acute problem that needs to be faced is the growing *unemployment* on the land and in the cities of the developing world. Perhaps the building of the new towns themselves and provision in them for reasonable human shelter could provide the greatest opportunities for new employment. Buildings (including housing) can equal 50 per cent of a country's fixed investment. They can provide employment to relatively unskilled labour, while encouraging savings and hence productive investment.

A very marked asset is that the *wealthy economies* are expanding by at least three per cent a year, on the average. They control steadily increasing resources for any purpose they may choose: colour T.V., space programmes, more powerful cars, rebuilding cities, economic co-operation, etc. This rising income is the world's greatest asset. It is at the root of mankind's new *freedom to choose between a great variety of alternatives*. And thereby hangs a tale! Here is a hopeful prospect. The combined GNP of the members of the DAC of OECD is likely to rise from 1,700 billion dollars in 1968 to about 2,300 billion dollars in 1975 (in constant prices) and the implementation of the target of one per cent of GNP would thus raise the flow of external resources from 12.8 billion dollars in 1968 to at least 23 billion dollars in 1975.

The *new humanism* is surely another support, constructively

warring as it is against the emptiness of wealth, prestige, meaningless conventions, popularity, and seeking instead to serve mankind. Isn't it heartening for instance to find many young people protesting against expensive weddings and entering careers where the stress is less on profit and gain and more on meaning and service such as research, rural work? In general there is, without doubt, a growing sense of human solidarity and brotherhood. Many such young folk no longer see science as the light of the future, guiding men out of superstition and poverty to greater wealth and wisdom. They see it as developing a power that drives governments to build space rockets and supersonic aircraft instead of houses and schools. They look for answers not in more science but in better understanding of social and human relationships and of the individual himself. This mistrust of the technological revolution is not among people excluded from its benefits. It comes from the most intelligent and some of the most affluent sections of peoples.

There is next the *notable ecumenical interest and concern* of the Churches in exploring their attitudes to social issues and their potential contributions to development. Witness the Beirut Conference, the creation of Sodepax, the gatherings at Montreal, Bossey and the Christian consultations on development in India, Indonesia, Australia and Asia. This is a feature to be strengthened in every country, in all regions and at world level.

"Christians are totally committed", proclaimed the Beirut Statement, "to the unity of all mankind under the leadership of Christ, the Son of Man, and hence to unity and justice in the world society in which the human family lives. They believe in man's God-given responsibility to use his resources to recreate and renew the face of the Earth".

What makes such joint Christian endeavour all the more significant is the way in which the UNO and other world experts are collaborating with the Churches in the deliberations and proposals.

These then are some of the signs of the times, interpellations by God across the current of events. God makes a sign. And creation awaits the revelation of the sons of God (Rom. 8. 19).

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or are in any way afflicted these are the joys and the hopes, the griefs and anxities of the followers of Christ". The Vatican Council's last document presents a great challenge indeed, namely to make this truth and ideal of Christ take on flesh and blood, muscle and bone; to incarnate Christ in today's society, in the whole of today's world.

Poverty has always been the lot of man, but ours is the first century when the question can be put in so many words. Why is poverty stretched over the earth in this fashion and can't something be done about it? Or, better still, in the agonizing words of Pope Paul, "What should be done to fight against the conditions of life in the world which are incompatible with the dignity of the human person? What must be done to prevent people from dying of hunger? What must be done to bridge the gap between nations which are prosperous and those which are in want? What must be done so that justice rooted in solidarity should reign? What can the Church do? What more can she do to show herself once again untiringly as educator and inspirer of the indispensable effort to resolve an intolerable situation, an insult flung in the face of humanity?" Till recently the Churches left such issues as development to the Government and to the secular citizen as their exclusive concern. Matters of the "spirit" were largely unrelated to "material" needs of man, especially man in society. The Christian was almost advised to remain untainted by such involvement. In the course of the last decade particularly there has been a marked shift of emphasis. Today a heroic effort of spiritualization is demanded so that the technical and material progress of which we are so justly proud may serve to further the emancipation of the human being.

The present situation is in the nature of a frightful summons especially to all believers to serve a world in the process of unification, to meet the obligations of technical advancement, to draft with vision the blueprints of tomorrow designed for the dynamic shaping of a temporal society worthy of man.

The Vatican Council had two basic aims: to update the Church and "to help *men to solve* the problems of our time". (Or, as Pope John said, "to dedicate ourselves to that work

which our era demands of us".) In discovering Christ in the world's poor, the Council also discovered the Church's need of poverty. This was a very valuable insight indeed. It linked the Church's movement towards the world's sufferers with its conformity to Christ.

This demand for internal renewal of the Church side by side with a response to the world's problems is, in effect, *a call to holiness* to all the people of God, so well set forth in chapter five of *Lumen Gentium*—Christ the Light of all Nations. "All of Christ's faithful, whatever be the conditions, duties and circumstances of their lives, will grow in holiness day by day through the very *situations*, if they co-operate with the divine will by showing every man through their *earthly activities the love with which God has loved the world*".

Technology (says Bergson) needs mysticism and needs it badly. The meaning of history does not belong to technology or economics; salvation comes from the wedding of religion and science, from the spirit of holiness allied to technical competence.

II. THE BATTLE AGAINST EXISTENTIAL POVERTY

A. THE MORAL IMPERATIVE BEHIND DEVELOPMENT

Development is a complex question bristling with difficulties. Experts maintain that to bridge the gap between nations which are prosperous and those which are in want, so that justice rooted in solidarity may obtain, a change is required in the whole economic system and financial structure of the world; new sources of subsistence in a world still "lying fallow" awaiting cultivation; new methods capable of increasing productivity, changing the mechanisms of international trade, and so on and so forth. Understandably, therefore, there is hesitancy and questioning and not a few misgivings.

It can hardly be denied that the Church should be interested, concerned and even involved in the central problem of our age, in this movement stemming from the aspirations of people to find a better life and their implicit faith in man's ability to grapple with the challenge.

Can the Church be just a passive spectator of the human

evolution taking place which matters so much for the spiritual and moral maturity of humanity? Is she to be just a witness to the birth of a new humanism in which "man is defined above all, by his responsibilities towards his brothers and history"?

Socialization provides unforeseen resources for calling brotherly love into operation. The idea and process of development towards a "community of mankind" should be welcomed by a universal Church too long identified with the West. These concepts are rooted in principles of "truth, justice, love and liberty" and could well become a ferment of purification and renewal for all civilisation.

Pope Paul has called "development" the new name for "peace", and the statement of the 1966 Conference on Church and Society hailed it as the fundamental human concern of our time.

Isn't there a moral imperative then behind world development and international economic co-operation? As "conscience" of the universe, isn't this the way for man to "weave his history"?

B. THE CHURCH'S VISION AND CONCERN FOR DEVELOPMENT

Precisely because it is largely a pragmatic service operation, it is imperative for us to have a clear vision of the task of the Church and the role of Christians in the work of development; to seek out the best motivation for the enterprise and a dynamism of love and service that will provide courageous and cheerful perseverance in the face of heavy odds which are likely to persist for many a day.

1. *Development is human:* The Church is concerned because economic development is a part of human development; "man is the source, the centre, and the purpose of all economic and social life".

The principal purpose of productivity is not mere multiplication of products but the service of man, and indeed of the whole man, his material needs and the demands of his intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious life.

Building the earthly city provides the conditions for the full development of the human person. It includes a certain

sufficiency of material goods, the development of human freedom and dignity and the progressive growth of human solidarity.

In the language of U. Thant, Secretary General of the U.N: "Development is growth plus change; change in turn is social and cultural as well as economic, and qualitative as well as quantitative. Social reform and economic strategy are two sides of the same coin, the single strategy of development." And the Church believes that through her individual members and her whole community she can contribute greatly towards making the family of man and its history more human."

2. *The claims of social justice:* The question of development must be understood not only as a war on want or the elimination of destitution, but in the wider context of the restitution of human dignity to all persons everywhere and social justice on the international plane. These are values the Church prizes dearly and should foster in every way possible. We are at a moment in history when the development of economic life could diminish social inequalities, if that development were guided and co-ordinated in a reasonable and human way. Modern economy is characterized not only by man's increasing domination over nature, but also by closer and more intense relationships between citizens, groups, countries, and by their mutual dependence, and by more frequent intervention on the part of governments. Man's economic life has assumed world-wide dimensions and is gradually—though not quickly and vigorously enough—being directed towards the good of the entire human society.

Before this fact of socialization, before this growing interdependence of men brought about chiefly by modern technical advances, the Church, also by her interest in economic development, manifests her solidarity with the entire human family and, being herself a communion or fellowship of the redeemed, seeks through it to further the growing unity of mankind and greater economic co-operation in the international field. Hence, the Fathers of the Vatican Council stated plainly that Christians who take an active part in modern socio-economic development and defend justice and charity should be convinced that they can make a great

contribution to the prosperity of mankind and the peace of the world. And, added the Council, "whoever promotes the human community, at the family level, culturally, in its economic, social and political dimensions, both nationally and internationally, such a one according to God's design is contributing greatly to the Church community as well, to the extent that it depends on things outside itself".

Not wanting to leave the matter at that, in the famous paragraph 90 of "The Church in the World of Today" the Fathers postulated a special agency of the universal Church for the world-wide promotion of justice to the poor and of Christ's kind of love to them. The role of the organization, as envisaged, is to stimulate the Catholic community to foster progress in needy regions and social justice on the international scene. To carry out the wishes of the Council, Pope Paul set up the Pontifical Commission *Justice and Peace* in January 1967 and less than three months later gave it its charter in his memorable Encyclical on the "Development of Peoples", "charging it with bringing to the whole of God's people the full knowledge of the part expected of them at the present time". Justice is a dynamic reality. It is progressive and its object evolves along with the progress of culture and the growing recognition of man by man. Since the source and end of justice is love, it shares in the dynamism of love itself and this dynamic justice demands action at our hands at all levels, not excluding the international.

3. *The path of universal human solidarity:* A positive imperative of this dynamism of justice is to choose the path of of universal solidarity. "I feel", wrote Gandhi in Satyagraha in 1920, "that nations cannot be one in reality, nor can their activities be conducive to the common good of the whole of humanity, unless there is this definite recognition and acceptance of the law of the family in national and international affairs, i.e. on the political platform. Nations can be called civilized only to the extent that they obey this law. That I also believe, is the truth". Indifference to this fact can have serious consequences for mankind.

Pius XII sounded a warning in 1953 when addressing FAO delegates: "Peoples favoured by nature or by the progress of civilization are in danger of being rudely awakened one day,

if they do not take the trouble to secure for the less fortunate the means to live in accordance with human dignity and develop on their own account".

To quote the famous words of John Donne, "No man is an island; entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent . . . any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee".

In the words of the Pearson Commission's Report: "Concern with the needs of other and poorer nations is the expression of a new and fundamental aspect of the modern age—the awareness that we live in a village world, that we belong to a world community."

Enlightened and constructive self-interest is another motive, for if we wish the world to be secure and prosperous, we must show a common concern for the common problems of all peoples. There is no other alternative worthy of man.

The Report of the Beirut Conference in its fine pages on *The Christian Concern* puts it tersely: "Why do Christians concern themselves with the full human development of the world? Quite simply because we believe that it is God's will and that this concern and the action that follows it is laid upon us as human beings by our Creator. God speaks to us in the demands of our fellowmen for bread, work, health, education—in short, for human dignity and justice. And our responsibility is not merely as persons for other people, but also for the political and economic structures that bring about poverty, injustice and violence. Today our responsibility has a new dimension because men now have the power to remove the causes of evil, whose symptoms alone they could treat before".

"We live in a world where many men have high hopes—and we say that their hopes for human well-being, justice and peace are justified and are God's hopes. . . . With all men we are moved by our developing sense of human solidarity and . . . we see the work of God in history both in and through Jesus Christ and His Church and also in the world".

4. *Theological considerations:* Economic realities are not purely "profane". They come from God and must be directed

to God.

The *primary purpose* of the whole *creation* is to make God known to man. God has created nature and man and worked through history to bring His creation to fulfilment. Part of His providence is the gift of freedom and creativity. Thanks to this gift, man can subdue the earth and use its riches for all men. The Christmas liturgy teaches us that we should "acknowledge God in visible things that we may through Him be drawn to the love of things invisible".

But creation also carries a *challenge* calling upon men to complete it and make it serve the higher aims of the human spirit. The things of nature are, in themselves, not complete, but await man's work to give them their full significance in the pattern of the universe in submission to the plan of God. The temporal mission of mankind consists in this collaboration with the creative activity of God and in the realization of the providential plan which, through Jesus Christ, shapes the world.

There is a *third purpose* in creation and it is a more exalted one. It is for man to *return the creation to* God, that he may be glorified in it and by it. Created things, inanimate or living, should find in mankind the voice by which they sing the glory of their Creator and proclaim their submission to Him who had made them. "The heavens proclaim the glory of the Lord". Men have a common task: it is for them to develop all aspects of human life and activity in such a way that the whole of the human race becomes a hymn to the Creator, and men themselves grow in the process.

Temporal activity and therefore also economic development is according to God's will and plan. "Man, created in God's image, has received the mandate to subject to himself the earth and all it contains and to govern the world with justice and holiness, a mandate to relate himself and the totality of things to Him who is to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all".

To go a step further. The *Incarnation* is at the centre of the historical stage. By taking human form, God invests fallen creation, the material world and man's existence with a meaning and dignity all their own. Through the Incarnation all things have become instruments of Christ's almighty power;

all things are called to serve. In the words of David Stanley: "The Incarnation has nullified the ancient distinction between the profane and the holy. Through the human life of God's Son, all that is noble and good in human experience has somehow been re-created and restored by the creative act of the Incarnate Word of God".

Though purely human values are not grace in essence, they possess a positive value in God's saving plan. Otherwise than ignorance and backwardness, they provide signs and symbols of God's eternal glory and clear away the obstacles that hinder the action of God's Spirit.

Our earthly task of civilizing and mastering the universe falls within the general scheme of the life of obedience and submission implicit in a life of grace. For those who are servants of God and brothers in Christ in and through grace, the world with all it contains recovers its primordial meaning.

But it was not intended that Christian humanism should limit itself to the negative role of clearing the obstacles to the work of grace; it must also take on, with healthy pride, its positive and religious vocation received in and through the grace of Christ.

God's word makes the world transparent, turns it into a shrine and tabernacle of the divine, living presence. The world is to us a divine milieu in which our earthly life achieves its fullest meaning thanks to God's presence and love.

By the mere fact that Christ entered into this world, the All Holy into the realm of sin, His Sacred Humanity has affected the world to its very foundations. Because He was not only man but also God, the world has found in him a new centre, a new basic principle and unifying law. In Christ's humanity and body, the material world as a whole has been blessed; in germ it has been freed from its curse and once again oriented Godward. The Incarnation teaches us that the entire human reality may ferry divine grace and can be assumed into a God-centred life. Within such a God-centred life, even anonymously, the construction of the world and the development of peoples become an activity which is not only intentionally but intrinsically relevant to the Kingdom of God.

The reorientation of all human life in a direction which is

not easily discernible by men's native intelligence, is a characteristic work of Christ as the second Adam. In Christ, God reunites His whole creation, including matter, but especially man, in a new economy of salvation. He gathers up His entire work from the very beginning to purify and sanctify it in His incarnate Son, the God-man Jesus Christ.

Without this *recapitulation of all mankind* and indeed of all creation in Christ, the creative work of God would in a sense remain frustrated and vain.

This recapitulation of the work of creation, sublimated and perfected in Christ, is a communion in the divine life, an infusion of the life and glory and power and truth of God not only into a man's spirit, but, also ultimately, into all the material creation as well.

The work of Jesus Christ is a *Continuing process.* It will be complete only when this new life has re-established order in the life of every man; when the whole material universe becomes the servant of the new man and is thus re-oriented towards God; when the *Mystical Body of Christ* reaches full maturity, the whole of humanity having been reunited by the flaming spirit of love divine. Then the plan of the Father will have been accomplished, to re-establish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on earth. A Christian's vocation is to co-operate in the realization of the Father's master plan and thus bring the Incarnation of Christ to fulfilment throughout the entire breadth and width of time and space.

One's whole cosmic existence is necessarily involved in the reality of our re-birth in Christ. Grace affects us also in the material aspects of our being already here on earth. Both our body and the entire cosmos receive a true germ of immortality, everlastingness and *resurrection*, thanks to Christ's redemption and in virtue also of our own personal grace of reconciliation.

"The mystery of Jesus' ascension signifies a revolution in the whole idea of religion." So writes a modern Scripture scholar. It means that the way I find the sacred is in what was formerly thought of as the profane. It means that the successful quest for God is to be carried out in the world through human experience.

If somebody still asks: "Why bother about things that will one day disappear? the best answer, I suppose, would be in the words of St. Paul that the world will not be simply annihilated at the end of time but it will be transformed. Hence, as the Vatican Council puts it so pointedly, "the expectation of a new earth must not weaken but stimulate our concern for cultivating this one". It is the *future kingdom* then that is in process of being realized under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the last analysis, one's involvement in the service of the temporal city and in the construction of a more human world becomes fully meaningful only when it is related to this expectation of the glory that is to come. This is, I suppose, the cosmic significance of the virtue of *Hope*.

Moving towards a future which men themselves under God are in the process of making, development becomes the realization of man's highest spiritual capacities. Development, in its profoundest sense, spells responsiveness in faith to the human canvas before us and through the presence and grace of the Spirit, investing our earthly activities with the love with which God has loved us.

Therefore, the existential challenges of hunger and disease, poverty, illiteracy and backwardness cannot but draw the Church into the fray. Christ not only taught us to tend ceaselessly to the Father in heaven, to grow constantly in our union with God, He also had compassion on the multitude and He asked us to do the same. In fact, in no uncertain terms He has indicated that we shall be judged on the last day according to our practice or neglect of the works of mercy and charity. *As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it unto me.* These words according to the more common interpretation concern not just "disciples" but all men and especially the poorest, most oppressed, most despised.

On the basis both of the decree of God and of the existential conditions of the Incarnation, there is a particular solidarity, a certain "juridical identification" (in the words of Theo Preiss) between Christ and all those who are in need of help—the poor, the hungry, the imprisoned, the lowly. The poor are a sort of sacrament of the encounter with God; our way to Him passes through them, says Fr Congar. There is in grace and

in God, inasmuch as He is agape and grace, not only some possibility of being with the smallest, but an actual inclination to go to the poorest, to the one who is most miserable, so as to communicate to him His God and His Life.

Now, progress in the methods of production and in the exchange of goods and services has made the economy an apt instrument for meeting the intensified needs of the human family more successfully, and hence the Church is understandably interested in economic growth and progress. The *Gospel commandment of love* truly manifests itself in the mastery of production and the organization of the whole society in justice and at the service of all men. The man who is genuinely religious consecrates himself unreservedly to the service of humanity. In the service of love, technology is another weapon in the armoury of the spirit.

The acceptance of human life in the concrete with all its responsibilities is an act of God-centred faith. Christ Himself has shown us, by living it, that human existence, taken concretely, was for Him in His human condition, the objective expression of His communion with the Father and was for the benefit of His fellowmen.

And here is the mystical touch, in the sober, religious vision of the world of Jan van Ruysbroeck in the Spiritual Espousals: "You know well that a meeting is a gathering of two persons coming from different places which in themselves are opposite and apart. Now, Christ comes from above as a lord and generous donor who can do all things. We come from below (from earth) as poor folk, devoid of strength and in need of everything. Christ comes to us from within outwards and we come to Him from outside inwards. And for this reason, a spiritual meeting must here take place."

The words "we come from outside inwards" are very significant. Beyond but through our exterior deeds of obedience, occupation and dedication, we tend to Christ interiorly. Here as always, especially in the supernatural order, we humans are concerned with the interiorizing process. Our scattered insignificant daily actions should lead us, deep down in our hearts, to the great surrender in faith and love from outside inwards. This then is a vision of the world through which the Church can help mankind to try and see God's will in our time. It is

an act of service to men and with men for the truly human development of the world, "haves" and "have nots" working together to change each other's attitudes and structures so that the world's resources and talents may be put at the service of the common good of all. All genuine love has a universal quality.

Christian piety, writes Nicholas Berdyaev, has all too often seemed to be a withdrawal from the world and from men, a sort of transcendent egoism, the unwillingness to share the suffering the world and man. It was not sufficiently infused with Christian love and mercy. It lacked human warmth and the world has risen in protest against this form of piety as a refined form of egoism, as indifference to the world's sorrow. Against this protest only *reborn piety* can stand, care for the life of another, even material bodily care, is spiritual in essence; bread for myself is a material question, *bread for my neighbour is a spiritual question.*

III. CONCRETE PROGRAMME OF ACTION

It should be abundantly clear from the foregoing why the Church should be interested and concerned with development.

In his charter on "The Development of Peoples" Pope Paul addressed to all men "a solemn appeal for concrete action towards man's complete development and the development of all mankind" and charged the Justice and Peace Commission to pursue the matter: "to make better known the facts in all their dramatic extent; to help people discovery the gigantic dimensions of these facts; to make people realize the means of remedying the situation and above all to arouse an ever-increasing awareness of the new obligation which derives from the universal brotherhood of man."

Obviously, Christians do not have a blueprint for action. It is not the mission of the Church to propose concrete solutions to the problems of development but if it is to *co-operate in finding the solution to the outstanding problems of our time*, then, unquestionably, there is need of strategic thought and action. "Theory without practice is sterile, just as practice without theory is blind".

In effect the Church and her members and organizations

can foster development in three ways:

Education: The educational effort, to the extent feasible, should be ecumenical in its widest sense, including other Christians and men of other faiths. Its task is a multiple one:

1. First, to secure *information* on the existing world situation and to share the same as widely as possible, as a first step towards concern and involvement.

The information should include the solid record of achievement, four-fifths through the efforts of the developing countries themselves. "The popular calumny," for instance, that aid money is not well used is a frequent pretext for reducing aid. George Woods points out that "the pictures of pervasive waste and failure are simply not borne out by facts." Success stories have an important psychological value; for instance, the tripled use of fertilizers in some developing countries in recent years; the intangible gains, e.g. growing availability of educational skills, power plants catching up with themselves, etc. Would that more intermediate technology were promoted in advanced countries in the interest of the developing lands. The educational campaigns at work in Britain, Holland, Canada need to be better known. Ecumenical efforts of a striking nature in any country should be highlighted, e.g. in India—Action for Food Production (AFPRO) and the National Board of Christian Higher Education, and Christian Medical Mission in the field of health.

The educational task has many facets. It must be biblical and theological, it must educate for world citizenship, it must cover the economic, political, social and spiritual fields.

2. The relationship of development to the *Bible and Theology*, the spiritual roots of our commitment to development must be brought home to Christians everywhere, and also the full implications of universal human *solidarity*. Drawing heavily on the Bible, Christians must be made increasingly aware of the richness and force with which the word of God inculcates universal justice and brotherhood. A faith not concerned with the building of a just and neighbourly world would then seem totally inadequate. Education for world citizenship would also emphasize the intimate connection between full human development founded on justice and solidarity and a lasting world peace.

Liturgical and other services designed to further concepts of world justice and development would be another means of leading people beyond petty concerns and national exclusiveness to wider horizons of the oneness of peoples and the sharing of the earth's abundance. These could also be ecumenical and sometimes (e.g. on U.N. Day) might include suitable readings from the Encyclicals, U.N. publications and other religious literature.

3. *Economic and social education*, at least in a general way, is also indicated. People must be given an understanding of world economic relations and structures, their eyes must be opened to the grave problems still awaiting solutions; for example, how to break out of deadlocks, how to enable the forces of modernization to penetrate through ancient traditional patterns of life; how to build up and/or change leadership; how to get people in the developed world to accept changes in their way of life simultaneously with the revolution taking place in the developing countries. The desired goals can be obtained but at a price. The answer could be higher taxes, occupational changes, greater sacrifices for better terms of trade and aid to the extent that can be efficiently absorbed, and genuine, honest and full sharing of technical know-how, instead of withholding enough to perpetuate permanent control! People must be shown that this will have very little effect on their standards of living and that the balance of payments difficulty can and must be solved by the rich countries collectively.

4. *Political education:* The health of society is bound up with its proper understanding of the world and men. It did not make either. Without the mind and will of God, who made both, it is doomed to sickness. For a Christian, it is a primary duty to bring God to the service of society's health. The main point of political education would be to strive to form a "national conscience" which is sensitive to the demands of world social justice, and would produce the "political will" for a world economic and social order in consonance with a fully human and Christian vision of life. "Something at least as drastic as a surgical operation is needed", says Sir Malcolm MacDonald, "to create new healing relations between the peoples of the West and the East. It is

a change of heart . . . a meeting together of the renewed nations of the East and the old nations of the West on a footing of equality, as glad, mutually devoted partners in the struggle of all humanity to attain peace and enlightenment."

To mention only an item or two. Those who know admit that there is a measure of exploitation now in aid itself. The main point for deeper and more sincere consideration and action should be: what real difference will such aid effect? The same applies to trade trends. In fact the road blocks that need careful scrutiny are: financial transfers, trade accumulating debts in developing countries and structural problems in industrialized ones. Popular organisations everywhere should also be given greater importance, also "open" regionalism as a policy. As a matter of fact Christians, especially in developed countries have the duty to ask themselves whether they should not work in their constituencies and beyond towards changing the structures themselves, instead of just tinkering with the problem within the existing framework of international thraldom, e.g. in the field of trade. Not all the aid in the world can compensate for the sin of stifling trade. If in most developed countries the thinking of the powers-that-be was fully Christian, and not just national, the difference would be reflected in tangible gains on the international scene. That is one role for Churches and Christians today.

While on the concept of development, I would like to suggest that to restore the balance another Christian lead could be to view the problem largely through the eyes of the developing world. The seventy-seven at Algiers were thrilled with Pope Paul's letter on the Development of Peoples; that was hardly the case with Wall Street and the nations of the North Atlantic.

Australia, which is so close to the Asian scene could well assume the role of bridge-builder and interpret to the developed Northern hemisphere in a forceful manner the viewpoint of emerging nations, that the development relationship be founded on mutual understanding and self-respect and on a clear recognition of the interrelationship of assistance, trade and investment.

What is crucial today, when the notion of development is in a crisis, is to bring to it the thrust of "liberation". It might

make all the difference to the prevention of violent revolution if the Christians of the world were to bend over backwards to reverse existing trends and unsatisfactory world patterns through new policies and more enlightened and radical strategies for global development. Bilateralism for instance should be contained and placed within a multilateral harness.

In the past the Churches and Christians have tolerated social, economic and political injustices and to that extent must admit their "share in responsibility for the world's divisions and hatreds." Most of the imbalances and dilemmas of the developing world are an inheritance from the past and a by-product of the successful development of the wealthy Atlantic world and more recently Japan and Russia. Twenty per cent of the world's people command nearly 80 per cent of the world's income, investment and trade and between 90 and 100 per cent of shipping, banking, marketing, insurance, research.

Is it too much to invoke historical justice to call for an act of penance and obedience to the Lord of history through a movement which would seek to redress the balance? That I think is another Christian challenge for the Second Development Decade. Failure to think on these lines can only accentuate the emotional impediments to the Church's involvement in development, the suspicion of the motives behind the new interest. We may not forget that for many a non-Christian westernism (not to say imperialism and exploitation) is regarded as part and parcel of Christianity. A cleansing process seems indicated if such psychological barriers are to be removed.

There is still another way of approaching the subject. It turns on the concept of total development and links up with the total mission of Christ. "The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for He has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour."

Even the Beirut and Uppsala documents fall short in this respect. To express his idea of total development of man and society, Mahatma Gandhi coined a special word: *Sarvodaya*. It goes beyond the democratic idea of "the greatest good of the greatest number" and seeks to embrace "the greatest good

of all." This is very Christian in conception and merits our united attention. Development cannot be equated with material goods available for consumption or with the economic aspects of development. GNP is no guarantee of the possession of other values and qualities. Our concern must be (as the Beirut Report puts it) with men everywhere, in all their capacities, their opportunities, their culture and their religion. We must be concerned with the deprived, the victims of injustice, poverty, ignorance, ill-health and war and also with the rich and the poverty of affluence.

5. *Spiritual Education:* Many of the implications of development demand a closer look at the spiritual texture and tenor of our lives as Christians. The call to holiness goes out to all the people of God, and they must be helped to see that its special feature today is the pursuit of evangelical simplicity, the better to battle against existential misery and destitution.

As Gandhi put it, civilization in the real sense of the term consists not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment and increases capacity for service. Only so will the stamina be forthcoming—the will to deliver the goods.

6. We are living at a turning-point in history. For the first time it has become possible to place within the reach of of men spread over the globe cultural goods that make for true human development. Immense hopes, therefore, mark the aspirations of men and their faith in reason and in one another to achieve those hopes together.

It can be done. The basic issues are simple and compelling. The greatest evil in the world is not poverty but unconcern. What is weak—and very much so—is political will, and this must be produced by the combined efforts of research, education, and dynamic action. Governments will do what public opinion will support or demand.

The call of the moment, therefore, is for *creative responsibility to generate enlightened public opinion that leads to fruitful action.*

7. *Education and influence in the concrete:* In order that the fundamental understanding of the need for world community and the growth of a Christian conscience to match the

physical oneness of the planet with the institutions of justice and love may become the common partrimony of the generations to come, all sectors in the Church should be exposed to the appropriate *educational* experience.

(a) Consequently, Bishops' Conferences, teaching orders and all concerned with education should be encouraged to include the teaching of international social justice in the curricula of schools, seminaries, universities and all institutions of learning.

(b) Similarly retreats, sermons and specifically religious instruction should emphasize the discussion of world justice. Competent study groups would continue the work of elaborating a doctrine of world-wide development and justice.

(c) Parents and educators should be deeply concerned to devise a syllabus which gives the first introduction to the concepts of human brotherhood, social obligation and world-wide justice.

(d) Young people, especially in the university world, have a particular role to play in campaigns of education and citizenship. Our educational effort and the mood of youth can meet. They want to see the Church changing! Their freshness of approach can be a powerful educational influence upon their elders, and together the right things may be done and quickly.

(e) the *media of social communication* should of course receive high priority.

Special efforts are called for to get educational programmes on to local networks for radio and television. Nor should the traditional means be ignored—songs, poetry and symbols, artists, playwrights—holding up for emulation modern heroes like Gandhi, Pope John and Martin Luther King, whose names will be linked forever with brotherhood, racial tolerance and social justice.

POLITICAL ACTION

1. The *laity* are to be the leaven of the temporal order and must tackle its renewal as their own special obligation. Secular duties and activities belong, properly although not exclusively,

to laymen. It is for them to animate temporal affairs from within, influencing them always to become as Christ would wish them to be. Outstanding among works of this type is Christian social and political action. One obvious conclusion is that more and more genuine Christians should enter public life.

Active political commitment is an urgent obligation on the Christian helping to build the Kingdom, with all that this implies in reading, study and pressure on the men who take the decisions.

As for the *clergy*, their primary duty is to proclaim the Gospel. But inasmuch as the promotion of the development of peoples is a concern of the entire Church, they too have a role to play, particularly an inspirers and animators of the right kind of action; maybe, owing to circumstances, especially in the developing world, to provide temporary leadership and help in evolving a thesis of development; some perhaps for scientific research as witnesses in this field after the manner of Teilhard de Chardin and to ensure full Christian perspective in accordance with God's plan in creation, recapitulated in Christ.

2. "Action by Christians designed to commit governments to policies of development will be ineffective, unless it is fully ecumenical and strictly based upon local needs, patterns and possibilities."

The *lobby* and the *vote* are forms of pressure that should be effectively exercised where a parliamentary system of government is in operation.

3. Whatever the situation, Christians can accept a general order of priorities and strategy in world development. For example, they can urge that the development strategy for the 1970s prepared by the United Nations be completed with all due speed. The particular targets of specialized agencies may, after scrutiny, also be supported.

4. Diocesan, national and regional conferences, with secular leadership prominent, could be arranged from time to time to spread the ideas of development and justice among the body of citizens. Both before and after the conferences, the cities chosen are made the focal point of sustained effort and submitted to what is called "saturation treatment".

Canadian cities provide the example of successful techniques.

5. Volunteers should be recruited for constant pressure on representatives at the national and local level. They would have to be well-informed about the facts and then submit parliamentarians to regular pressure as the need arose. They might even seek to make the outcome of an election dependant on the candidates' attitude to development and justice.

Christians in the developed world particularly must manifest more significant leadership in the field of economic assistance, the more so as in practically every constituency they could provide a ten per cent dedicated minority.

6. Since governments still carry the responsibility for most of the world's ultimate decision-making, *action within each nation is essential.* But care must be taken to keep the issue at the level of international social justice and world development, and not to get bogged down with concepts of patronage and handing out charity and alms to dependants.

7. In all their endeavours, Christians should be at pains to work for truly international policies, and support the strengthening of international agencies at the centre and in the regions.

8. Since newspapers, radio and television can play a vital part, citizens should do all they can to ensure that development news is reported in proper perspective and in depth. Wider and fuller coverage especially of the many successes in developing countries can do a tremendous amount to boost the morale of those in the thick of the battle.

9. By the same token, Christians should never cease to insist on the relation of world peace to world poverty, justice and development and to decry the awful scandal (in Lester Pearson's words) of "preparing for war like precocious giants and for peace like retarded pygmies"!

From the altar of the Eucharistic Congress at Bombay, Pope Paul made an anguished cry to all governments of the world: "Would that the nations could cease the armaments race and devote their resources and energies instead to fraternal assistance to the developing nations!"

10. In promoting economic and social development through its activities and influence, the Church must rely on qualified experts regarding specific programmes. There is

now a substantial degree of consensus as to the general needs, priorities and policies required for effective progress. The Pearson Commission Report is a case in point. It is for the Churches and Christians to press for action along these lines with all the resources at their command. "Christian citizens everywhere" in the words of the Beirut Report, "should pledge their support to development as a settled commitment, campaign or lobby for development by all means at their disposal, and give governments, parties, leaders and agencies no peace until the whole human race can live with reasonable ease and hope in its single planetary home".

STRUCTURES FOR THE TASK

1. When the Fathers of the Vatican Council sought to bring to bear on the challenge of development the Church's vision and concern, they proposed a special agency for the purpose, and the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace was the Pope's answer. It has already done significant work. To provide stimulus and co-ordination this Commission has in turn recommended the setting-up of national commissions which are technically competent. These are requested to work in close liaison with comparable committees of other Churches, as here in Australia. What is important is that the programmes be genuinely supported. Canada's Catholic Development Fund is devoting twenty per cent of its collections to educating Canadians about the needs of development, and Christian aid in Britain does something similar. These examples provide inspiration and guidance.
2. Within the Church itself, central and local authorities might consider appropriate acts of generosity designed to give a lead to their own people and to others in the field of development. The Church's own commitment and response is an example which the secular community is more likely to follow. In this connection some of Dr. Dickinson's pointed questions may not be out of place.

> "Do the churches benefit financially from present social inequalities on a world scale? What is to be said of the morality of vast properties of the churches held for display and pomp and tradition when the world desperately needs

development aid?"

"Have the churches sought to influence the investment policies of the companies in which they have holdings?

What kinds of pressure can be brought upon all Christians and all churches to reflect on the moral uses of their money and properties?

Do the internal fiscal policies of churches impede rather than contribute to social justice and development?"

In order to manifest her love for the poor, should not the energies of the Church be devoted more notably to the task of evangelizing the masses? "The poor have the gospel preached to them."

Is there any proportion between resources in personnel and means expended on work among the 'rich' and that for the poorer classes within the Church Universal?

If we would remedy the existing imbalance, it is not enough to whip up the voluntary contributions of the people; there must also be, as part of the renewal and change of heart, a shift of emphasis from the concept of rights and duties to that of corporate responsibility and full Christian solidarity. As Rabindranath Tagore puts it in "Towards Universal Man," "Who are the real friends of all the peoples in search of freedom and development?" His answer was: "Those who follow the painful way of Christ, stained with the blood of the divine Chief who took upon Himself the sufferings of the world in order to ensure the salvation of the human soul and to lead it to the light."

3. Perhaps the Church everywhere could dedicate a regular and significant portion of its resources to the direct fostering of development, while striving to narrow the gap between the "haves" and "have nots" within the Church.

4. Plans might also be worked out to enable individual citizens to devote a percentage of their income to development. What about a voluntary tax system for the bulk of Christians in the world? If in a spirit of personal discipline and authentic evangelical poverty they were prepared to use some of their collective wealth in this fashion, what might the impact not be? If this were done even before the governments of the world were pressured into greater generosity, would it not be a significant lead? We should not be self-

righteous but is it not the role of the people of God to raise a prophetic voice?

5. The Christian aid agencies have been doing a splendid piece of work for many years, but it would do no harm if they did some stock-taking. This is particularly desirable from the angle of liaison with other bodies in the field of development and the suitability and effectiveness of projects undertaken. Also worth examination are their relationships with the beneficiaries, organizationally and otherwise, information services and sales campaigns, and the impact in general on the country's susceptibilities.

The Beirut Conference makes a further point: "Christian agencies working in the field of direct relief are asked to stress in their work the need to change the conditions which lead to the necessity of relief. While hungry children must be fed today, a transformed agriculture can mean that they feed themselves tomorrow. In collecting funds for relief the organizers should emphasize this aspect of constructive hope".

6. Missionary societies and religious orders with mission interests should integrate the world justice and development programme into their course of studies. Expert consultants could help formulate policy and educate missionaries-to-be and those already in the field. Obviously these efforts must be integrated with the entire missionary apostolate and the pastoral plans of the region. Whenever feasible, they should be worked out on an ecumenical basis in the broadest sense of that term.

7. World development and justice would perhaps also be benefited, at least indirectly, if there were a planned approach to the work of evangelism, including a proper concept of mission and service.

The Church proposes a global vision of man and of the human race, but does not claim any specific competence in defining or orientating the historic process of development. The Church does, however, have a specific mission: to proclaim to men that their destiny is not limited to its earthly accomplishment (however dramatic and exalting) but that this destiny is accomplished in their relation with God, lived in surrender to His will, i.e., in love. This dimension of human existence has been accomplished "once and for all" in the

sacrifice of Christ, in His death and resurrection. This mystery of the Redemption, which is part of history, and which the people of God in its own body does what it can to continue through its terrestrial tasks, throws a new light on the history of mankind and modifies it even in its very dimension of constructing the world.

8. The Church's ecumenical efforts should be associated with what Dr Visser't Hooft called "secular ecumenism", viz. the work of the international agencies. In the close co-operation between the religious and secular bodies explicitly dedicated to world justice and world development, some of the foundations of a functioning world order could be laid. These "pre-legal" communities should prefigure the genuine world community of the future.

CONCLUSION

Christian witness then in the field of development is not just a matter of professional efficiency, which is no doubt essential, nor is it purely a personal and individual matter; it covers the enormous vistas and challenges included in a proper concept of development and a deeper and full understanding of the meaning and mystery of Christ, the Church and the poor. Instead of lessening our confidence and courage, today's tremendous human problems should deepen our Christian love. Instead of suggesting flight, the needs of our brethren should inspire compassion and give us the spirit to essay remedies that appear to transcend reason and what is ordinarily possible. It is a work of Justice and Peace and in the true biblical meaning of the words we may say "Blessed are the merciful"—not only those who have compassion or sympathy but those who work actively towards remedying the distressing conditions under which men are forced to live. "*Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution, so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way in the goodness and holiness of the truth*" (Eph. 4.23).

Man is made for God. He is on a journey. He does not reach his full stature until he offers to God, through Christ, not only himself but a whole universe which his creative efforts have made more human. It is by this road, at once personal and universal, that the Church calls him to find his way to eternity.

6

The Problems of Population and Development: A Theological Perspective

Already from the days of the Second Vatican Council, I have had the privilege of being associated in some measure with the Church's ongoing efforts for the world-wide promotion of "justice for the poor and of Christ's kind of love of them". The Vatican Justice and Peace Commission and its counterparts in many countries are continuing, as Gaudium and Spes put it, to "stimulate the Catholic community and to foster progress in needy regions and social justice on the international scene". In as much as the search for a theology of development is an ongoing concern, your meeting is a welcome contribution to the cause, and I am happy to be associated with it.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEOLOGY

The choice of the topic—"Catholic Theology and the Problems of Population and Development"—seems to indicate that the formidable problems thrown up by the world of today, e.g., in the economic and political order, and which hitherto were

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Given to the World Federaton of Catholic Universities at New Delhi, on 11th August 1975.

considered foreign to theology have now been brought within its purview. It is refreshing to find theology broad ning its perspective in this fashion and taking its rightful place in the encounter with the world and its challenges.

In this context, it seems evident that theology could hardly be satisfied with, much less confined to, a merely deductive approach, without adequate reference to the realities of life. To be true to itself, it must reflect in an inductive manner on the historical experiences of change and development and bring them into creative confrontation with the Word of God. The task of theology, then, is not only to interpret the Faith, but to enable it to enter into society and transform it. But, if this is so, if theology is to spring also from life, and rest on facts and the correct evaluation of them in context, what would the implications be for the thinking habits, the preoccupations and life style of members of the theological faculties around the world? Will they not have to discover the right measure of their involvement in the concrete problems of man and specifically in the universal quest for development, justice and peace? If theology sets itself tasks like the one implied in this conference theme, the research, thinking and teaching done in faculties and universities should not be allowed to remain in some rarefied theoretical stratosphere but be closely related to earthly realities, the better to insert therein the ferment of the Gospel message and become themselves a transforming force.

A second methodological observation I would like to make concerns *collaboration*. There will be inter-faculty collaboration as well as international, inter-cultural collaboration.

As for the first, it is not only indicated but indispensable, given the complexity of the population problem, the problem of development and the relation between the two; the more so as they are all bound up with economics and politics, psychology and biology, demography, education, history, sociology, culture and medicine; as well as with men's habits and tastes, religions and theologies. Life is not simple; there is no short-cut to truth. The search has to be long and patient to discover the truth that will provide a basis for right action.

None will gainsay the need for an *interdisciplinary approach*, but there is precious little of this so far. The difficulties are

not to be ignored, but the task cannot be evaded. It is gratifying to find this meeting prepared to face the challenge, in the awareness, presumably that the credibility of the Church's teaching on these matters is involved.

The urgency of the *link-up with the human sciences* becomes dramatically poignant when realization dawns, that, beyond the demands of the academic, it is a question of bread for the hungry millions, a matter of their very survival. The problem on hand is crucial; it brooks no delay.

Not less acute are the difficulties when *international collaboration* is the question.

(a) The understanding of development and population, the appreciation of problems involved and practical priorities differ according to divergent economic systems, cultural background and political interests. Our thinking can be conditioned by the atmosphere, ideology and system in which we live and work. The Bucharest Population Conference has amply demonstrated that the perceptions and priorities of blocked and handcuffed nations do not in fact coincide with those of affluent and dominant peoples.

(b) The problems to which we are addressing ourselves are concrete with a local hue and resonance. Their solutions can only come from within, out of local thinking, involvement and experimentation, assisted, when necessary, with appropriate expertise. Solutions imported from elsewhere, even if genuinely intended for and conducive to the real welfare of the beneficiaries, still only perpetuate their dependence and impede development worthy of the name. There is no universal model of development. Developing people must develop themselves; their efforts to direct and utilize their human and material resources primarily for the benefit of their own people must be strengthened; they must be assisted with the appropriate technology, and their efforts towards bilateral and peaceful settlement of differences must be appreciated and encouraged. Outside interference calculated to hamper the process of reconciliation and stabilization is to be deplored and condemned. Only so, in a post-colonial era, will developing countries be able to make their own history and interpret it to themselves and to the world. Understanding and helping them unto "self-confidence" for their task is very much in order.

(c) It is in this context that the need for *indigenous research and theology* takes on special significance. The plurality of methods and findings that may emerge need not be a cause for dismay. On the contrary, if we are to go beyond the present half-hearted attempts to end the staggering poverty of more than half of the human race—a disgraceful blot on all mankind—this breakthrough is imperative. Not only will it rectify the imbalance of the developed world's monopoly on research but, hopefully, it will get us away from trends emanating from or imitating that world and its models and turn us instead towards understanding human development through they eyes and from the condition of those who matter the most—the rural poor of the world.

(d) Perhaps it will be asked: why can't this be done? Could we not work together on the basis of our common humanity? Yes, but a common humanity is yet a programme; it has to be striven for and won. Society has been mutilated by fragmentation into conflicting classes, and oppressions old and new have made a universal human history impossible until the contradictions are overcome, and brotherhood established and expressed in shared bread and shared earth.

PROPHETIC ROLE OF THEOLOGY

One way out of this impasse would be for theology to become *truly prophetic*. Here is a function theology has been neglecting for long with the result that in a believing community economics and politics have been allowed to drift and develop along largely anti-gospel lines. Theology could pick up the tradition once more and discern for us the signs of the times: the sign of the hunger of millions, of handicapped economies, of China and Vietnam, of Black Power, of the anger of Africa, of Latin America's theology of revolution. It could bring some clear criticism to bear upon socio-political and economic systems. Theology has yet to undertake a serious critique of capitalism and laissez-faire competitive culture, of affluent consumerism built on colonial and neo-colonial exploitation and slave labour, as well as of existing arrangements of trade and tariff, and power and powerlessness. Theology has been too negative in its appraisal of socialist ideologies. Following on the

lead of Pope John and the Council, there is room for a fresh evaluation of these and the experiments stemming from them in today's world. Insights and perspectives for the remaking of man and mankind discovered therein and discerned as such by the light of the Gospel should be pressed into service for the building-up of the new humanity.

Before a limited understanding of theology projected in the past by theology itself, many inside the Church and outside, secular institutions and governments, fail to appreciate the new interest it is taking in economic and socio-political matters which once it had disdained as profane and of small consequence. Christian and religious people were expected and told—and sometimes still are—to confine their activity to church and sacristy, to prayer and worship. There is need then to affirm with a clear voice that the Church is as much committed to the conversion of social structures and the milieu as to that of individual hearts; that religion and theology are also ways of sharing in God's concern for man in community, man who is God's partner in creating the new world and re-creating himself in the process. For man is not a finished product, but a historical reality moving towards his own wholeness. The wholeness is made possible and prospered and built through daily struggle against everything that dehumanises and humiliates. Every struggle for human wholeness has theological import. It is here that problems of population and development belong.

INTEGRATED APPROACH

It is true that in regard to development, population, and problems relating to both, an integrated and holistic approach is necessary. Development is not only quantitative, but qualitative; it consists not only in economic growth but in self-reliance, social justice, freedom, dignity and participation. While it is gratifying to note that this has come to be realised, at least to some extent, we cannot be blind to the facts as they are today and the urgency of making the new attitudes operative. For recognition has come after twenty per cent of the world's population have acquired and keep on consuming eighty per cent of the world's resources, and have likewise amassed enough power to worsen the situation. As Barry Commoner

stated, "The gap between brute power and human need continues to grow, as the power fattens on the same faulty technology that intensifies the need". Mahatma Gandhi's reminder is as urgent today as when he uttered it: "To the hungry man God doesn't dare to appear except in the form of bread". We need to listen to Jesus saying to his disciples and to his Church: "Give them something to eat yourselves". We know that without bread there can be no Eucharist and no sharing community.

The problem of development and population is *essentially a problem of bread*, bread to be produced and distributed. We refuse to subscribe to the idea that no development is possible before a substantial reduction in population is effected. We rather accept and add our emphasis to the position stressed in some of the background papers: Fr Bone's statement that "a region grows rapidly (in population) because it is poor" and then a vicious circle sets in; three-fifths of all births take place in the developing countries. And Fr Hesburgh's reminder that "Social and economic development is the important, perhaps even the essential condition for the reduction of births". Again Fr Bone points out that "One feels more and more that whilst it is imperative that mankind should provide itself with institutions in line with population increases, the only adequate remedy lies in a policy which is oriented towards the redistribution of goods and education, towards a new way of sharing things out, a new economic order of things; suppression of the 'lion's share' attitude in dealing with the poor countries, first of all, the practice of austerity by the rich". Hence action for development in the shape of *distributive justice* is the pressing imperative in face of the problem of population increase.

IS REDISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH POSSIBLE?

But it is precisely this that the wealthy and the privileged do not want and seek to prevent both within each nation and in the international sphere. Witness the failure of the development decades and the gruesome fact that after two decades and a half of world cooperation, the developed countries have benefited more economically from aid programmes than the

beneficiaries themselves! In the Bucharest Conference of August 1974, a member of the North American Delegation, called infantile the request of the Third World for a new order in which developed nations would have to limit their own consumption in order to help the poor countries. He stated that "the redistribution of resources is impossible". Again as others have pointed out, "Reports of bodies like the Asian Development Bank state very clearly and cynically that the social structure in the rural areas (in South East Asia) although it may be backward, should not be drastically transformed, because such a measure would upset the social order which is still necessary to create a sound climate for investment". A report of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco on investment in Asia says: "This study is premised on the belief that future U.S. and Japanese private investments in Asia will fundamentally shape the form and the substance of Asia's ties with the world economy". That is the language of today's global economic system and world dominance. In the words of J. Decornoy: "They may tolerate the replacement of a flag, by another flag, but not of a society by another society". Besides the operation of such multinational corporations, we would also have to list: unfair advantages of trade arrangements, war-mongering through the ever-increasing sale of military hardware, and innumerable military bases spread over the globe.

A realistic look at today's world reveals, then, that there is not only an explosion of population: there is in particular an explosion of affluence, an explosion of armaments and an explosion of the power to manipulate and to kill. How has all this come about? Through what decisions, processes and value-sets? What does it all amount to? How are the wrongs to be righted? What are the implications for the theologians of today?

There is a common oppression of all men by the material values which determine all economic and social activity. Affluence, then, pursued for its own sake, the "good life" and "the great society" spread over the globe are not desirable goals either for individuals or nations, much less for the Church. "Civilisation", Gandhi pointed out, "does not consist in the multiplication of wants but in the deliberate and volun-

tary reduction of the same". What the Gospel requires of the rich man who retains his wealth is not that he ask: "How much ought I to give"? (this implies attachment to earthly goods); but rather: "Am I obliged to hold on to my possessions? How much ought I to keep"?

THE CALL TO GIVE

For a Christian, life is a self-surrender to God. Evangelical simplicity sets men free to live as children of the Father and to enjoy that wholeness of life which God became man to share with us. "I have come that they may have life and have it more abundantly". Is it not the role of theology to spell this out in depth and apply it to the global context for a *wise stewardship* in the use of the world's resources?

Can the proper understanding of the integral development of man and the pursuit of true "wholeness of life bring about freedom for the rich from the dehumanising influences of their riches and at the same time the liberation of the economically poor, the partnership between peoples becoming in the process a mutually enriching experience—*Liberation-Cooperation* (Sarvodaya Shramadhana)?

Now that there is a fresh cultural transformation in the making, which is gradually recognizing that the "money economy" is bankrupt and the power complex has become, through its very excesses and exaggerations, impotent and a new life-economy is in the making, has theology nothing to say to the opportunities thus offered especially to leaders in traditionally Christian countries and in the United Nations? Have we forgotten that there will be no changes at world level unless and until there is a change of heart on the home front in the nations themselves, especially of the developed world? Is all this a fresh reminder that the greatest social evil besetting us today still is unconcern—the terrible perpetuator of poverty, discrimination and exploitation?

CONCLUSION

The growth of the peoples of the world and its concomitant problems are an interpellation from God to His people in the

world today. Will the theological faculties of the world help Christians and the Church to be able and willing to listen to the voice of the Spirit speaking in these happenings? As Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the U.N. Conference on the Human Environment, pointedly remarked: "Let's face it. If the world has to change, this means that Christians must change".

I would like to end on that note and conclude, as he did at Stockholm, with a call for spiritual renewal through a behaviour pattern he outlined for the new epoch: "To thrive in the ecological age, we must adopt new dimensions of cooperative behaviour, subject our competitive drives to new disciplines, show a wholly new willingness to share the power and the benefits of the high technology civilisation as well as its responsibilities. This is true both nationally and internationally. And to make the choices which will decide the ultimate fate of men will require a degree of collective wisdom and enlightenment that can only come through a new moral and spiritual awakening".

7

Social Justice Priorities in Health Care

One of the notable and welcome signs of vitality in the Church of today is the growing concern for justice. This has obviously been the case also in New Zealand, as this meeting puts the focus on "priorities in justice", on which I have been asked to speak.

It would have been quite natural to begin by identifying the principal injustices and then listing some suggested priorities. I am taking a slightly different approach in order to highlight not just the exigencies of a Christian conscience in the face of current problems but our corporate responsibility as a Church, also to the work of justice.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The essential mission of the community of believers is evangelization. That supposes a pilgrim Church in action, dynamically engaged in the tasks of the Kingdom. The first imperative is to create the consciousness that we are the people of God, whose responsibility it is to Christianize the environment, to

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Given to the Medical Guilds of Auckland & Wellington, New Zealand, on 11th August, 1979.

bring about a world community where the Spirit of God fully breathes. A community filled with the Spirit, vivified and governed by him, because constituted by Jesus' shared breath (John 20/21-23), the Church must experience itself as brotherhood and community at all levels—local, regional, continental and global—and first and foremost with those of the household of the faith. Simultaneously, the internal *relationships* of fellowship and sharing should be extended, as part of our mission, to other religious groups and to the national and international community as a whole. We are engaged in community building and that, in the main, is a matter of relationships.

This in turn means bringing the Gospel into all the strata of humanity, touching the personal and collective consciences of people and thereby transforming humanity from within and making it new. Individuals and people among themselves with their traditions and cultures are all to be enriched by the light that illumines every man coming into this world. The Church is sent to proclaim the work of justice and peace with prophetic impatience and must never relent in this task. The moment Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace and the author of true human brotherhood, becomes obscure in the consciousness and preaching of the sign-community, it ceases to be his Church!

The drama of our times is no doubt the split between the Gospel and life as it is lived and propagated with growing intensity. The encounter with today's mass culture will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed.

Both in the East and South, thanks to the population explosion, and in the West and North, due to de-Christianization, the Church will remain "a small flock" living in a diaspora situation. While humanity is maturing, the role of the sign-community within it will continue to be that of a leavening influence, of giving a soul to today's society, of bringing the Spirit to a world in crisis and in search for new models of society,—in a word, to give to history-meaning, purpose and its ultimate destiny through the Risen Lord at work in us and in all men.

The unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man's concrete life establishes profound links between evangelization and human advancement. How in fact, says Pope Paul (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 31), can one proclaim the new command-

ment without promoting in justice and in peace the true, authentic advancement of man? It is impossible to accept "that in evangelization one could or should ignore the importance of the problems so much discussed today, concerning justice, liberation, development and peace in the world. This would be to forget the lesson which comes from the Gospel concerning love of our neighbour who is suffering and in need".

THE ROLE OF THE LAITY

The task of the Church in its totality is carried out by the laity and the hierarchy together. The faithful share Christ's role of priest, prophet and king and carry out the mission of God's people in the Church and in the world. (The Church, 31.) The layman has a role to perform in all aspects of the Church's life; in spiritual matters as well as in secular matters; in taking an active part in the liturgy as well as being concerned, for instance, in the activity of a trade union.

But the primary and immediate task of the laity is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community—this is the specific role of the pastors. "Evangelii Nuntiandi" describes the role of the laity as "to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences, of the arts, of international life, of the mass media. So too the area of human love and the family, the education of children and adolescence, professional work and suffering". (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 70.)

The very structure of human society today demands differentiation and specialization even where Church ministry is concerned. Specialists, scholars, professionals, scientists in every field have a contribution to make from daily life as it is lived. That brings us to the medical field and the evangelizing role of the Guild and its members, from the springboard of "small-is-beautiful" New Zealand.

MALDISTRIBUTION OF HEALTH CARE RESOURCES

A technological area in which sufficient knowledge already

exists or only needs to be adapted to specific conditions is that of medical care. The innovations required no doubt involve social, economic and political change, but not necessarily of a sweeping nature. In spite of this, the distribution of health services around the world is still far from satisfactory. A few facts will show that lack of money and lack of skilled personnel are the most obvious obstacles—apart from the lack of will to deliver the goods.

The U.K. spends roughly £40 per head of population to keep its National Health Service operating; the U.S.A. £125; whereas in Ethiopia, for example, it is 20 pence a year for each of its 22 million people.

There are ten hospital beds for every 1000 in the U.K.; there are fewer than two per 1000 in Mexico and only 0.4 per 1000 in India.

In the U.K. there is one doctor for every 860 people, whereas the ratio is one for 5000 in India; one for 13,000 in Haiti and one for 30,000 in Nigeria. In the U.K. the doctors are also more evenly spread over the country. However, it is true everywhere that the areas with the highest proportions of ordinary working-class people attract the fewest doctors. Those most in need of medical care are the least likely to receive it. In India, for example, 80 per cent of the population lives in the rural areas, whereas about 80 per cent of the doctors are to be found in the towns and cities. David Morley's "rule of three quarters" finds application also in England between, e.g., metropolitan London and the teaching areas of the various health regions as against the most needy regions. A WHO report has it that in the Americas as much as 37 per cent of the population are at present under-served and in Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, South East Asia and in the Western Pacific (excluding China) the population of 1660 million (in 1970) may be 80 per cent rural and as many as 1075 million may not have access to primary health care. The main problem seems to have been nutrition with either stagnant or declining calorie and protein consumption.

Childhood mortality in developing countries, which accounts for half or more of all deaths, is about forty times as high as in industrialized countries. The diseases of the developing countries are largely those of poverty; in the case of children

they are diarrhoea, pneumonia and malnutrition.

Health services are run for the most part by people who have never experienced anything other than middle-class life and are designed to cater very much for middle-class patterns of illness behaviour. Since doctors in developing countries take the western medical profession as their reference group, their aspirations are also for advanced, technological medicine. Even in Britain the teaching of community medicine and public health is minimal; it is non-existent in some colleges. Surveys have shown that under 2 per cent of students would choose community medicine as their first choice of career. (The Lancet: May 1970.) Since 98 per cent of all research takes place in developed countries, the problems that are studied are those that stem from those countries and the gains have only limited usefulness elsewhere. The same goes for medical education. If the training prepares doctors markedly for medicine as practised in a modern teaching hospital, they must then either practise in the cities or go abroad. Trickle down expectations do not materialise! They have not been fulfilled in education, much less in distributing the fruits of development!

Just what is happening is this. In the Britain of today, 35 per cent of all hospital doctors were trained overseas and over 60 per cent of senior housemen were trained in the Third World. While this is a boost to the host country's medical services, it represents a sizeable drain of resources for those countries that are most in need of trained medical personnel. Incidentally, the same brain drain takes place with regard to 10 per cent of medical graduates in the U.K. (Lancet, August 1974.) Indulging in futile criticism is no remedy. The answer lies in the field of training.

If one were to make a generalization—it would appear that, the world over, those at the bottom of the social order, whether in city, township or rural area are denied access to adequate health care—a core basic need along with food, shelter and education. And thereby hangs a tale! For poor nutrition, like poor health, can have a crippling effect on a nation's capacity to produce and to develop.

Small wonder that there appears to be widespread dissatisfaction of people about existing health services. A few years ago, WHO summed up the reasons as "a failure to meet the

expectations of the populations; an inability of the health services to deliver a level of national coverage, adequate to meet stated demands and the changing needs of different societies; a wide gap (which is not closing) in health status between countries and between different groups in countries; rapidly rising costs without a visible and meaningful improvement in service; and a feeling of helplessness by the consumer who feels (rightly or wrongly) that the health services and the personnel within them are progressing along an uncontrollable path of their own, which may be satisfying to the health professions, but which is not wanted by the consumer.. ". "Services have been unable to give emphasis to consumer preferences and to make medicine "belong" to those whom it should serve".

Reading between the lines of the above summary, the imbalances that need to be redressed could readily be identified. I will confine myself to the broad outlines of two priorities, one for the people as a whole—community health care—and the other concerning the individual,—wholeness of life for person in society seen from a Christian standpoint.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE

Particularly during the last decade or so, medical opinion has been veering noticeably away from curative to preventive medicine. Today primary health care is being accorded the highest priority. That is a welcome response to the signs of the times. It ties in well with our Christian redemptive function of healing and that too on the basis of priorities of need.

The Declaration of Alma-Ata of September 1978 defines Primary Health Care as "essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community through their full participation and at a cost that the community and the country can afford to maintain at every stage of their development in the spirit of self-reliance and self-determination...". 'it brings health care as close as possible to where people live and work, and contributes the first element of a continuing health care process". Primary health care, so described, is a dynamic and evolving

approach to promoting, maintaining and restoring health, which commends itself in many grounds. There is a shift of emphasis from high level technology in hospital-based curative medicine to the intermediate technology of middle-level skills of a health care centre with the emphasis on preventive health. If that gives us a jolt, we might pause a moment over the following question. Where is the equity in denying basic health services to helpless millions while engaging in, let us say, the most elaborate and expensive attempts to save the life of one man by heart transplantation ? Isn't it as bad as being able to travel rapidly to another planet and yet to be apparently paralysed in the face of senseless wars on this one?

Assuming that a generalized health service does cover a country fairly well, such specialized hospital services are still expected and should be provided. However, in most countries district hospitals are a much greater need. The focal point in fact is even lower down, namely, the health centre with its outlying aid stations or dispensaries. These can be operated by medical assistants and qualified nurses even in the virtual absence of anyone with a university education. Such medical auxiliaries are substitutes or alternatives, not complementary to the full professional, even though their knowledge may not go beyond understanding the pattern of management of a disease. The role of a doctor is to act as teacher, supervisor and consultant to a team of auxiliaries. Often enough, he would be required to supervise a series of health centres or to run a district hospital. The focus of medical attention must be shifted from the big teaching hospital at the centre of town to the unobtrusive health centre in the village. Even better than supervising a net work of health centres would be for doctors to lead the community in the improvement of its own health, that is, to initiate "community health action". What is paramount is a community outlook for the doctors and the teams they lead; in fact, a shared enthusiasm. Studying together the medical needs of the people they want to serve would be one way of bringing this about.

The idea of training auxiliaries who either assist or substitute for doctors started in the South West Pacific almost a hundred years ago. Even now recruits for the Assistant Medical Officers (AMO's) of Fiji come straight from the local

secondary schools. In the past a second tier doctor was extensively used in India and was called the licensed medical practitioner or surgeon's assistant. I understand that in New Zealand there is a newly established training school, where medical receptionists receive a year's training to enable them to act as "doctor assistants".

Recognizing the value of extending health care in every society through the use of auxiliaries is rapidly gaining acceptance all over the world. Let me, nevertheless, throw in a note of caution. Primary health care is not a magic panacea. Health need is not just a clinical matter; it has to take account of cultural and social variables, not to speak of political pressures. These, and fallen human nature, may become a spanner in the works and in the process generate a new form of professional domination. It is vital, therefore, to keep the goal always in mind, namely, *effectively to reach those most in need.*

As far as existing hospitals are concerned, the adoption of basic health community-based services, including natural family planning and mobile clinics should be done in such wise that in time the hospital will become secondary—the necessary adjunct it is expected to be, within such a renewed vision and framework of service. Success will be forthcoming if the necessary infrastructure gets simultaneous attention, particularly a reasonable sanitary environment, safe, sufficient and accessible water and nutritional rehabilitation. The World Employment Conference listed basic needs as including "first, minimum requirements for private consumption; adequate food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household implements and furniture; and, second, essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, educational and cultural facilities".

It will be noticed that the above represents an attempt to take a fresh look at the development process from the standpoint of a new yardstick, *basic human needs* (BHN). Such a shift of emphasis requires changing the direction of investment in a country. And that is a political decision, which governments may find difficult to sustain unless backed by the people in whose interest the redirection is to take place. This is where public opinion needs to be built up by prophetic groups,

like a Christian Guild of Doctors.

Equally important with national policies is international economic cooperation. The World Employment Conference —referred to previously—pointed out that "the satisfaction of basic needs is a national endeavour, but its success depends crucially upon strengthening world peace and disarmament and the establishment of a New International Economic Order". The last named is a focal point for practical endeavour. Given the ever rising GNP of the developed countries, and their ever lower contributions to development assistance without strings, given the recent farce of Unctad V at Manila, the criterion of basic human needs should evoke in all concerned people, and in Christians particularly, a passion to work might and main to reverse the present trends in favour of the disinherited of the world. To the shame of the so-called Christian countries it must be recognized that, notwithstanding the ambiguities of the matter, OPEC have in the last five years been contributing over 2 per cent of their GNP for the poor of the world. On the other hand, developed market economy countries have only come up with 0.31 per cent of their GNP. This performance has been a recurring decimal since they pledged 1 per cent in 1964.

In the egalitarian situation of a well-developed New Zealand, much of what has been said about community care is probably already operative. There may be scope for improvement with regard to the rural areas of the country, the Island Polynesians and may be even the Tokelau families on atolls because of their extraordinary sense of interdependence. It will be for you to judge.

The Primary Health Care strategy of the WHO and UNICEF (Alma Ata, September 1978) is illustrative of the welcome change in perception of the development process and the growing need to reorient development strategies and policies towards the elimination of poverty while affecting the overall improvement in the quality of life. This throws into relief the one-world dimension of the task of eliminating poverty. In its efforts to build community, the Church everywhere cannot but enter the fray and wholeheartedly.

CARING FOR PEOPLE

Medicine is for people and that brings me to even more fundamental questions which must be squarely faced.

Has our concept of health become so emasculated as to be reduced to the notion of non-illness? Has our health care system become the victim of a built-in contradiction that health is obtained by the eradication of disease? Isn't this a a purely clinical model of health which, with increasing technological skill, is cramping the spirit of true compassion and gradually making of health a mechanical product? Isn't there more to life than keeping it disease-free ? Isn't there more to being human than just being well?

Are modern medicine end hospital care operating on three wrong pre-suppositions, viz., that the cure of disease is more important than the care of people? that the provision of health is a task for the experts? and that death is the worst thing that can happen to man?

As Ivan Illich points out in "Medical Nemesis": "In every society the dominant image of death determines the prevalent concept of health. Such an image, the culturally conditioned anticipation of a certain event at an uncertain date, is shaped by institutional structures, deep-seated myths, and the social character which predominates".

It is here that a hospital matters very much, for it is a mirror of social beliefs about man in society. It is a powerful medium for conveying attitudes and values about life and death.

In Volume 66 of "The Hospital", Dr M. Wilson describes the primary task of a hospital in terms of human learning, viz., "to enable patients, their families and staff, to learn from the experience of illness and death how to build a healthy society".

If it is not the end of life we have to fear but the death of quality in our lives here and now, it is time we asked the most searching question of all.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF HEALTH?

"Will you be made whole"?

Concepts of health care are as varied and numerous as those of man's nature, life and death.

Health cannot be defined from a mere study of the body; we must consider the whole person in his human vocation and final destiny. To make an absolute of sheer physical vitality might be suitable in the case of animals; it is quite inadequate to describe a holistic vitality proper to a healthy human being. The ups and downs of physical strength may make a better contribution to the total growth of a person than an unrestrained vitality Mere bodily health is less significant than psychological and spiritual health, though we cannot lose sight of the triple interdependence.

Emphasis on physical fitness can even become dangerous when stemming from a philosophy of life and public opinion geared primarily to expediency. Similarly, efficiency in work and sports is only one criterion of health, among others. It is a proven fact that one's overall well-being depends considerably on the quality of the environment and on social stimulation; for health, like human nature itself, has a social finality.

Looking at the question from the standpoint of *illness*, we arrive at the same conclusion; for the definition of illness follows that of health. If birth has been described as a "terminal illness" necessarily leading to physical death, it is not surprising that man should have to pass through varying degrees of sickness during his earthly pilgrimage. Illness belongs to human existence. It reveals our human frailty, and always carries a message—for those who see—in terms of the reorientation of life and our human vocation and destiny. If the sickness rate in an army unit rise, the commanding officer's first concern is not more beds, but general measures to raise the unit's morale! Since much illness may be diagnosed as a disease of interpersonal relationships in a family, some hospitals now admit the whole family or, better still, send a professional social worker to the home!

This is not to deny that illness is rightly considered by the medical profession as an evil to be combatted and eliminated. But, all the relevant factors need to be borne in mind. We cannot ignore our genetic heritage, or the overload from a growingly technocratic world of noise and speed, or the negligence or malice of our fellowmen, or the stresses and tempta-

tions from the systems we are caught up in. All this is in addition to the consequences of violent personal outbursts, intemperance, drug abuse, impurity and all kinds of social maladjustments. Each personal sin is in some way an attack on health, as it sunders man's spiritual unity and the harmony of his being with his Maker, with himself, with others and with his entire environment. Small wonder that doctors tend to define true neurosis as stubborn self-centredness, or that Viktor Frankl points to "The great sickness of our age as being aimlessness, boredom, lack of meaning and purpose". An old Russian proverb has it that "the true sick man is the one who does not want to get well".

HEALTH IS WHOLENESS

The most revolutionary advance in modern medicine has to do not with drugs and operative techniques but with the rediscovery of the wholeness of the human personality, a dimension which was a marked feature of Christ's healing ministry. "Will you be made whole?" Invariably, the Master's physical cures involved some kind of spiritual therapy. Often he ignored the physical symptoms of a disease and want directly to its spiritual source. For instance, he detected illness in the Pharisees who regarded themselves as models of good health. It is to them he sarcastically said: "those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick". Sickness for him included not only blindness, deafness, paralysis and insanity; it included fear, materialism, depression, prejudice and all the other abnormalities of the spirit which denied men fulness and happiness of life. He knew that any person, sound of body and mind, could be afflicted by a moral malaise or a spiritual anaemia which, if not diagnosed and treated, might eventually result in severe suffering to himself and others.

The conclusion is forced upon us that health care requires attention to the total development of the whole person, to the needs of individuals, families and communities. It includes an awareness and willingness to do something about such problems as environment, malnutrition, and the balance between population growth and development. A community-based approach in health care offers a whole new range of involve-

ment and potential renewal for the Church and "The Guild of St. Luke, Saints Cosmas and Damian".

This does not mean condemning the past or discarding what we have and are doing. But it does represent a call to frame a new health strategy around the affirmation of wholeness as constituting health, and the recognition of interdependence of body, mind and spirit in the quest for health and holiness (pneuma-psychosomatic). There is a whole range of needs which make for man's biological satisfaction such as food, water, shelter, clothing and non-illness. But, there are others which relate to interpersonal harmony, responsibility, sense of purpose and meaning, human dignity, communication and sacrifice. If society today is sick, it is because while some provision is made for the first lot, precious little attention has been given to the second set, which relate not just to the needs of man as creature, but to man as man.

If in a hospital management, doctors, nurses and staff form a true community, the patients get a sense of belonging that predisposes them for the *pastoral cure* which is intended to embrace the whole person. The human touch opens the way to the life of the spirit even when it deepens the pain to a level where it is not taken away but can be shared. So many people suffer for the wrong reasons. Loneliness, confusion, doubt are wounds which are integral to our human state. A wise counsellor will deal with them creatively. And, in this context, a trained social worker would be an asset to any hospital. Illness always offers an opportunity for those who believe in redemption. The Gospel presents Christ primarily as Healer and Liberator, and He considered healing the sick essential to His mission. Convalescence perhaps is the best time to help patients to discover for themselves in stillness, deep down in the cave of the heart, that prayer is not a pious decoration of life but the very breath of a full human existence, and a healing therapy in its own right. Together, the team will bring to patients a true understanding of sickness, help them to discern its message and, when necessary, see it as the call of Someone waiting for us beyond the bar. A happy death is a recognizable one, seen hopefully as the climax to a meaningful, well-spent life which is but a prelude to life everlasting. "*I have come that they may have life and have it in all fulness*".

We must not read the Gospels in the past tense. They offer to every man the present possibility of a living encounter with the Risen Lord and hearing his gracious offer, "Will you be made whole"? and reaching out in faith to accept the gift of healing from the great Physician of us all.

Health and salvation are mutually interdependent in every human society, irrespective of culture, political affiliations or the level of GNP. And this is an ongoing process of liberation or renewal or wholesome healthfulness for each person as well as for the community.

In this context of full healing, the relationship of all the above with the Divine Physician needs to be highlighted. Inner healing can take place in personal prayer when a person prays alone. It can take place in a group when inner healing is prayed for. The privileged situations for healing to take place are the sacraments, especially the sacraments of Reconciliation, the Anointing of the Sick and the Eucharist. The new dynamic relationship discovered in the encounter with Christ at the deepest level of self in these socio-ecclesial reconciliations can complete the process of inner healing and be moulded into a commitment to transform human society.

A Christian community will become a healing community not just when wounds are cured and pains alleviated but when stresses and strains, when illness and death itself become openings or occasions for such a bright new vision leading through the doorway of humble love from selfishness to service of others and from solitude to kinship with all mankind. Saint Paul may have had some such vision in mind when he sent the Thessalonians this greeting: "May the god who gives us peace make you completely his; and heep your whole being, spirit, soul and body free from all fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".

CREATING THE WILL TO DO

Man today is in search of himself; he is struggling for human dignity, freedom, equality and justice; he is experiencing and craves neighbourliness, a sense of belonging and interdependence; he is searching for meaning in personal and community life. This is especially so in the case of youth.

The organization of socio-economic and political life today has created widespread dissatisfaction. It has led vast sectors of humanity to go the way of secularism, but it is also driving millions to break through the trammels of consumer societies and their ever-spreading goals in search of a more human and humane way of living. Simplicity in life-style and stewardship of resources are two important facets of such a programme. There is yet another sign; namely, a hunger and thirst for the Spirit in a world whose cultural evolution seems to drive it more and more towards an empty unsatisfying secularism.

The growth of the peoples of the world and its concomitant problems are an interpellation from God to His people in the world today. The big question is: Are Christians everywhere aware and really willing to listen to the voice of the Spirit speaking to us in these happenings? Do we, activists of a frenzied age, see in them a call to silence, to prayer and contemplation, to basking in His presence, to waiting on the Lord, to listening and responding, to receiving more of His might and power and love in order to be better instruments in *His* redemptive work of love and peace?

The Pope's people-oriented message to Unctad V pinpoints some of the human strengths to be released and marshalled for the encounter. They form part of the warp and woof of life brought into creative confrontation with the Word of God. "It is our shared conviction", he writes, "that the courage for the concrete decisions that must be taken and the inspiration of new ideas for directing the future will come from people who have been made more aware of their unsurpassable dignity, more aware of the creative possibilities of their minds, more aware of the potential of their different cultures, more aware of the powerful moral dynamism which impels them to seek justice, peace and fraternal co-operation. These are the realities that, in the eyes of a believer, have a depth and a guarantee that come from God".

As Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the UN conference on Human Environment, pointedly remarked at Stockholm: "Let's face it. If the world has to change, this means that Christians must change".

Hopefully, the twin mission of the Church will inspire and guide us as we continue in our endeavour to give man bread

and the sacred host; to teach the alphabet and the providence of God; to learn the value of work and the value of prayer; to save not only souls but men in their integrity and fulness.

8

The Role of the Family in a Changing World

The well-being of the individual person and of human society is intimately linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and the family.

The family is important in the life of the individual because it gets him first, keeps him longest; it is his chief school for cultural imperatives; it enjoins these on him with emotional finality. In this way the family unquestionably provides the environment for personality development.

Moreover, the family has given each one of us our name and our identity. We have a set of attitudes towards our family and perhaps clan which gives special emphasis and individual colour and tone to our attitudes towards families in general. We may not, therefore, forget the particular position from which we begin, the more so as it may be quite inadequate for present day needs and responsibilities.

Today, more than ever, we should bear in mind the social significance of the family. It is in the interchange of our private feelings with social considerations that our work for the family must continue. Maintaining and developing both the personal and sociological approaches can only help us to grasp the richness and complexity of family life and give its full significance to the family as a social institution.

Memorial Lecture delivered at Ernakulam, South India, in 1967.

THE CHANGING SCENE

One of the most striking changes in the history of man has been the reaction against unrestricted birth rate. Particularly in the last hundred years, births have declined considerably in most of the countries of the industrialized world. Developments in science and technology and fast-moving changes in social, cultural, economic and political fields have given a jolt to family organization. The changing status of women in society, the appreciation of children as individuals worthy of the best education, the organization of work away from the home and on a strictly individual basis, the State acting as foster-father for social and medical services, the upsurge of ideas of romantic love, earlier sexual maturity and more people marrying at a younger age than in the past, are some of the many factors that have altered considerably both the husband-wife relationship as well as that of parents and children. For one thing, the generation gap is highlighted and perhaps exploited by the development of a self-conscious youth culture. The independence of today's youth, also economically, is both frightening and thrilling!

In contrast to the above, the situation in the developing countries of the so-called Third World is characterized by poverty and an ever-increasing growth in population. Urbanization has run ahead of industrialization with unemployment, underemployment and other concomitants as unpalatable by-products. Pronounced restlessness especially among youth is a growing phenomenon along with greater sexual freedom and the gradual breakdown of the joint and extended family and the practice of arranged marriages. Sociologists maintain that even Asia is moving in the direction of personal mate selection, interpersonal goals in marriage and the achievement of fulfilment and happiness as conscious objectives.

These changing family patterns cannot leave us unmoved. They concern us as a fact or a distinct possibility and present a serious challenge. The tensions generated by conflicting tendencies have not always been resolved to the advantage of the family. An inadequate understanding of the personalistic approach to human sexuality has bred permissiveness on a gigantic scale; the frequency of divorce and its apparent acceptance

in society has seriously affected the age-old consciousness of one life-long partnership "till death do us part". Broken homes have left by the wayside numberless children with serious handicaps for their journey through life.

But we needn't lose heart. The family is one of the most flexible of social institutions and so instead of lamenting some of its supposedly lost functions, we should rather try to understand its role in today's developing world first as an integrating force for husband, wife and children to meet and accept each other and be accepted as full authentic persons and secondly as a social institution that can prepare the new generation for responsible living in the larger community beyond the family, and simultaneously promote justice, equity and the other human values and conditions of life that are basic for a decent human existence.

ATTITUDES TO THE FAMILY

Speaking at the International Conference on the family in Delhi in December 1966 the Union Minister for Health had this to say about present-day attitudes to the family:

> The family has always been a cherished institution in every society. We all appreciate that happy families constitute a happy society. A society cannot flourish without proper attention to the family. Still we seem to ignore the importance of investment in building happy homes and happy families. Social services generally are given low priority. Serious studies of family organization and the services based on such studies receive still lower priority. Where attention is given to such services, the focus is on maternal and child health services, old age homes, homes for young children destitutes due to death or separation of parents, or children suffering from certain disabilities, diseases and disorders. We do not seem to think that promotion of conditions resulting in well-adjusted happy families is also a subject worthy of careful study and appropriate action.

PREPARATION FOR RESPONSIBLE LIVING

There can be no doubt that families occupy pride of place in

preparing the new generation for responsible living. It is they who mould children during their formative years, through patterns and policies that go to make the life-style of the next generation. But most families will confess to a feeling of inadequacy before the tensions and uncertainties, youthful rebellions and sexual irresponsibilities of a growingly large number around the world.

On the other hand, evidence seems to indicate that where families have learnt the art, they are effective in handling the situation. In the good old days one generation patterned itself pretty successfully after the previous one. But today's fast moving and fast changing world does not find all the old ways adequate. For instance, children and youth today have to shoulder roles and responsibilities that were unknown to their forebears. The "knowledge explosion" in which science doubles man's knowledge every decade poses a serious threat to the authority of parents, who are no more considered as all that!

In the circumstances, members of the family appear to lack the equipment to face the challenges of today. Parents are confused as to what they should do, especially when it comes to explaining what it means to become men and women, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, in a manner suitable for children and adolescents today. Thrust into a wide, competitive, uninhibited world, youth today is not sufficiently aware of the dynamics of personality development and social intercourse, ignorant of the demands of mental health —notwithstanding the stresses and strains they will be subjected to—and generally misinformed or ignorant about the facts of human reproduction and growth. In the very areas of life in which they are most vulnerable, children and adolescents appear to be receiving the least education and guidance.

There is a growing awareness—unfortunately not sufficiently widespread—that the family member—adults, youth, adolescents and children—should be the beneficiaries of what is referred to as family life education. Governments, church organizations, schools and colleges, private initiative in some countries have already introduced suitable programmes.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

At an international study group on the subject, family life education was recently described as the systematic consideration of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values inherent in personality development and in the roles of family members at any stage of the family life cycle.

It is seen as "any and all school experiences deliberately and consciously used by teachers in helping develop the personalities of their students to their fullest capacities as present and future family members".

All this is not meant to interfere with—much less replace—family responsibility. Its purpose is rather to support and strengthen families in their arduous task.

Whether one appreciates these new departures or not, whether it is considered as premature or otherwise, the challenge is clear for all concerned with families and society to help children, adolescents, youth and adults for their heavy responsibilities as family members now and in the years ahead.

FAMILY MOVEMENTS AND TODAY'S CHALLENGES

The sociological analysis given previously points both to the present and to the future. Some of the patterns described will become more pronounced in the future; some of the attitudes will be more dominant later on. . . . There can be no doubt whatever that there are processes at work pointing in these directions.

Evaluating these changes and making accurate predictions would be a major hazard. This is where our own vision and way of life come to the fore, for we can not only read the signs of the times but attempt to judge them in the light of eternal principles and help to shape their development for the future. That is positive and a task that beckons to all men of of good will.

It is here that theological insights can be helpful. A better understanding of God's role in partnering the married couple through life would make all the difference to the spirit of love and community which should characterize a family and assist its task of community building at all levels in life. In the ulti-

mate analysis a love, faithful unto death, is a gift from the Maker to those whose lives are intertwined with his. It is the crowning glory of that movement of life and love inaugurated by the Creator and brought to fulfilment in association with those whose call it is to love, beget new life and love unto the end.

It is in this context that the Christian Family Movement assumes special importance as a small though significant effort.

Its very approach and techniques are particularly fitted, for it does not seek just to accommodate the views of the members to prevailing social forms regardless of their intrinsic worth, but rather to perceive reality as a first step, reflect on its implications in the light of the Gospel and take action appropriate to local situations.

Its strength lies in the fact that it is a mass movement of the people themselves; it is couple-centred and hence uses the properties of man and woman to the fullest. It works in small groups and thus creates a sense of belonging, active participation and personal responsibility for all the members of the team. Its stress is on action, not on meeting or discussion; it demands concrete, observable and attainable actions that build up the persons themeselves while they contribute to the general well-being.

The techniques used in the preparation, meeting and follow-up are designed to release lay potential to the fullest extent and its informality does not suggest school or college but the atmosphere of the home carried to a wider group in the effort to make happy families happier, in the home, in the neighbourhood, in the parish, city and country. CFM is a practical way for couples to become aware of the community.

Since the goal of each meeting is action in which all will take part, it is necessary that the conviction which impels the action be felt by all members and not imposed on the group by one person. For that reason meetings employ the group discussion method which has the added advantage that the group gets the benefit of the experience and thinking of many persons.

But perhaps the most important reason for using this discussion method is that it treats each member as a person who

should grow and develop as an individual. A good leader of a group makes this possible. He is always aware that the couples after leaving the meeting are to be leaders in their own neighbourhood. He is careful therefore to see that they take an active part in the meeting.

In recent times Marriage Enrichment programmes have done even more to develop consciousness of God's place in marriage and interpersonal understanding and togetherness in the very depths of one's being. Hopefully, the growth of the Family Encounter Movement will prosper this spirit even more and make the family a true springboard for community building in society.

A LIVING BRIDGE

It will be seen at once how helpful such an approach can be in the face of the changing family patterns of today. At the heart of the matter is a shift of emphasis, from the concept of the family as a utilitarian society to that of a disinterested community of persons.

Such an attitude is a far cry from preoccupation with sexual offences as the worst sins; or exclusive attention to the warnings of moralists concerning the evils associated with the family. "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness"; to hold out the hope and joy which is enshrined in every nuptial blessing.

We should review and emphasize family relationships in terms of loyalty and love. The development of the relations between husband and wife is a progressive growing into a true communion of persons and a less ecstatic but more profound happiness. Each member of the family, in so far as he or she is capable, should develop positive fidelity to the personality of every other family member. This would not only exclude from the marital relationship sexual acts outside of marriage; it would extend to the children in an active encouragement of discernment in the acceptance of responsibility for life and awareness of it.

AN OPEN COMMUNITY

Becoming in this way true communities of love, families can reflect for the larger body of society the ideals of community which it is our common task to realize. This requires that the family should be an *open community*, developing in its members a greater sensitivity to other persons and becoming much more "people conscious". This includes in the first place a consciousness of the presence of God. The prayer which Temple Gardner wrote for his fiancee and himself is to the point:

> That nothing may be between me and her, be Thou between us, every moment. That we may be constantly together, draw us into separate loneliness with Thyself. And when we meet breast to breast, my God, let it be on Thine own . . . .

The openness of the marriage relationship should also be evident in the potential welcome to the third person in the readiness to co-operate with God in the creation of persons.

This open spirit will doubtless extend the field of activities of family movements to influencing governmental planning and action in support of family welfare programmes.

Addressing the Catholics of the world and in fact all men, the Second Vatican Council had this to say on the role of the family in society:

> The family has received from God its mission to be the first and vital cell of society. It will fulfil this mission if it shows itself to be the domestic sanctuary of the Church through the mutual affection of its members and the common prayer they offer to God, if the whole family is caught up in the liturgical worship of the Church, and if it provides active hospitality and promotes justice and other good works for the service of all the brethren in need. Among the multiple activities of the family apostolate may be enumerated the following: the adoption of abandoned infants, hospitality to strangers, assistance in the operation of schools, helpful advice and material assistance for adolescents, help to engaged couples in preparing themselves better for marriage, catechetical work, support of married couples and families involved in material and moral crises, help for the aged not only by providing

them with the necessities of life but also by obtaining for them a fair share of the benefits of economic progress.

At all times and places but particularly in areas where the first seeds of the Gospel are being sown or where the Church is still in her infancy or is involved in some serious difficulty, Christian families give priceless testimony to Christ before the world by remaining faithful to the gospel and by providing a model of Christian marriage throughout their lives. It can help them achieve the goals of their apostolate more easily if families organize themselves into groups.

SOCIAL ACTION PRIORITIES

In one of the reports of the United Nations some guiding principles were stated for the establishment of priorities in overall social programmes These are: preventive measures, social measures to promote economic development, action directed at large masses of the population, measures and methods which associate individuals and communities with the action undertaken to improve levels of living.

It is very likely, therefore, that Governments will view favourably family welfare programmes which are directed to or will benefit a majority of the population.

In Belgium, there used to be a family movement which functioned largely as a pressure group to ensure for the family the benefits from society to which it has a right. It is esti mated that 40 per cent of the families of that country were members and naturally, therefore, they were a force to be reckoned with.

The 1980 World Synod of Catholic Bishops assigned to the family a role also in international affairs. Viewing the family situation from the standpoint of the poor, an appeal was made for solidarity with them, a preferential option for them, as families, especially better placed ones, to work together for a more just and brotherly world.

INTER-FAITH GROUPS

The world's burning issues today are human challenges that

should stir all men of good will. There is no reason why members of the CFM and other citizens of other religious faiths should not get together to work for the person and the common good. It must be made clear that the purpose is not for discussions on religion. That could be done, if wanted, in another context. This would be for humam dimensions, each member of the group making his best contribution to discussion and action, personal and corporate, out of the fulness of his own motivation, Christian or otherwise. It is the cause that matters and the family and what concerns the viability, growth and development of the changing family is certainly a good subject for a beginning. The United Nations Declaration on human rights could well suggest other topics of vital interest for this crucial period of our history.

A SERVICE OF LIFE

The relationship between husband and wife can be characterized as one of service to their offspring, and to each other. If this concept of service was always to the fore, marriage and the family would stand out as a service of life, a service to the life of whole persons in their double role as individuals and as members of the family and society.

Cana Conferences could perhaps be organized for married couples of all religious faiths and Marriage Preparation Courses could be shared with all youth preparing for marriage.

Occasional meetings should bring together for discussion of difficult issues the adult members of families and youth and adolescents. This might help to secure better understanding between the different generations.

Where feasible, voluntary groups should collaborate with governmental agencies with a view to securing more effective service to the families of the people.

It is hoped that in future there will be more action-oriented research on various aspects of family life, needs, and problems: better training for personnel in charge of family welfare services, and more significant pilot projects to secure for the family and its objectives a greater measure of devoted attention.

Whatever we do, the stand we take concerning the family

must not be negative or casual. It must be a sure foundation for future development, not a load that keeps us tied to the past; it provides a start for the on-going life of the Church and a guide in future explorations.

There is perhaps no other field of endeavour more worthy of our best effort than the family and, please God, large numbers will address themselves to the challenging task.

When there is harmony in the family there is contentment in the community; when there is contentment in the community there is prosperity in the nation, and when there is prosperity in the nation, there is peace in the world.

9

Meditation and Integral Humanism

THE ASIAN SCENE

The continent of Asia has had a glorious past. It has been the fount of great civilisations, the matrix of world religions, the repository of ancient wisdom. As the confluence of the cultural currents of East and West it has bequeathed to the world an enriched patrimony. Today this immense territory is the home of more than half of all mankind. It is a melting pot wherein half a dozen revolutions are simultaneously taking place, in the spheres of economics and politics, in the fields of science and technology in respect of social institutions and age-old traditions, in the impact of the mass-media on its cultural patterns, in the hunger for social justice and the thirst for spiritual renewal, in the dialogue of world religions and in international relations.

The magnitude of its problems and challenges cannot be gainsaid nor the fact that many of its difficulties are a legacy from the past. They cannot be adequately handled except with world-wide cooperation and mutal and disinterested assistance. However, Asia's resurgence and newly-found dynamism coupled with its rightly placed emphasis on self-reliant growth, social justice and people's participation, provide the realistic and

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Keynote Address to the First Asian Conference on Religion and Peace at Singapore on 25th November 1976.

living context in relation to which this Asian Conference on Religion and Peace assumes historic significance.

By and large religions have not concerned themselves with such problems, particularly those relating to economic and political systems operating in the world for or against man. Except to some extent in recent times, they have been busy with ritual, with themselves and with micro-ethics. Even now, after Kyoto and Louvain, we can hardly say that our religious constituencies are at one with us in the prophetic role we have sought to play through our statements and documents, let alone in the follow-up expected in their wake.

It is true that, thanks to the preaching and insistence on tolerance, compassion and harmony, religions in Asia have had a humanizing influence on our peoples. But it cannot be denied that they have also connived at or at least been listless in the face of discriminatory and exploitative influences such as feudalism, caste, the oppression of women, bonded labour and even forms of slavery.

FACING TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Total disarmament

But, as the Asian saying goes, it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. Fresh from the wounds of slaughter and bloodshed, the never-to-be forgotten scars of Hiroshima, the thirty years warfare in South East Asia and the searing of the human spirit that this period of history has spawned, we cannot but reiterate our call for total disarmament and endorse the summoning of a Special Session of the United Nations for a World Conference on Disarmament.

In an atomic age there is no sane alternative to world disarmament. It is the only realistic form of national defence, the only effective answer to mankind's greatest shame—world hunger—the only road to more jobs at better wages and higher living standards all round.

A New International Economic Order

Soon after the Second World Conference of Religion for

Peace a hope was expressed and a goal accepted "that within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, that no family will fear for its next day's bread, and that no human being's future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition". For the first time in history we have the resources and the technology to say: "It can be done". But there has been no appreciable change of heart since the World Food Conference in Rome, and hence no political will to deliver the goods. Individuals, communities, nations, all seem to be captive to the grasp of a world political, economic and social system that is basically and profoundly unjust. Interest and concern now hinge on a New International Economic Order, as a first step out of the quagmire.

The search for justice

A religious insight that has come to be accepted is that a true and lasting peace must be a *just* peace. The unequal bargaining situation in trade and investment; fair returns in terms of real resources; equitable income distribution within nations; containing the inroads of multinational corporations—all these are moral issues to which religionists cannot be indifferent. The existing system cannot adequately promote the development of the world's poor. Notwithstanding a spate of international conferences, the old order remains, not yielding place to the new!

Religious thinking can influence human action and thus contribute to peace. And so we must do all in our power to educate public opinion and awaken public conscience to take a firm stand against war, as well as to grasp the opportunity enshrined in the search for restructuring the U.N. system and for building a new world order. To the extent feasible this should be undertaken not only in our own lands but also with our religious constituency on a transnational basis. The provision of this moral infrastructure will buttress the efforts of our Asian leaders towards collective self-reliance and indirectly at least lend support to their negotiations at international forums.

PEACE THROUGH RELIGION

Our WCRP specific approach has been, not to discuss religion as such, but to apply the insights of religion to the problems and obstacles to peace and to the structures that stand in the way. But this cannot be done, without changing the people inside them. The internal conversion of peoples is as important and urgent as the change of structures. This need was felt and articulated at Louvain and doubtless it is for this Asian Conference to address itself to the question within the framework of our specificity both as Asians and as WCRP.

Looking at the past history of our nations, what stands out most of all is the sense of spiritual values that dominates the thought patterns of our sages and the lives of our vast multitudes. So too the discipline of our ascetics, the filial piety and attachment to the family and the veneration of ancestors. All these point to the primacy of the spirit and reveal the longing for the infinite and the interminable quest for the divine. There could be no better foundation on which to build the new civilization that is emerging.

The quest for inner tranquility

From the standpoint of Peace through Religion, we might well remember that most efforts for the promotion of peace are of a sociological nature whereas the Asian approach might well be to move from personal peace to harmony in human society.

Both Hinduism nad Buddhism consider inner peace and tranquility as the highest goal of human life and in fact a gift of God. It is from this perspective of inwardness that a pervasive influence is expected to be exercized in society at large. It is but natural that self-awareness should have led, even unconsciously, to the current emphasis on self-reliance in development and self-confidence in deliberations at international level. Asians would readily concur with Unesco's dictum that wars begin in the minds of men and that the defences of peace must likewise be constructed there. They would even want to go further and remind the world that there are times when the mind should keep quiet and let the spirit be about its business. This is the therapy of prayer for wholeness of life, body, mind

and spirit, which has always been a notable preoccupation in Asian countries.

If our personality is in a state of disarray, if we are in pieces ourselves, we can hardly expect to carry conviction in our efforts at peace-keeping. If we are at war with ourselves, we are naturally at war with one another. Beyond our inner divisions and distractions there is a unity and peace to which we can rise and where we will encounter the sacred dimension of all that is. William James had this in mind when he referred to the heart as "the red-hot point of consciousness". The primal community is that between each man's heart and the heart of his God. This is also the centre of every stable community. All others collapse because they are built on shaky foundations.

Besides inner tranquility, other Asian values of paramount importance to the process of humanization are simplicity and contentment, non-violence and compassion, cooperation, a spirit of adjustment and a deeply-rooted communion with nature. The Buddhist educator would sum this up as discipline, mental culture and wisdom.

The moral transformation of man

It is the road to that moral and spiritual development without which all material advance may prove to be a liability. A new star has arisen in the firmament and it is a harbinger of hope and peace. It is the growing realization that the new age must be characterized by a more spiritual approach, that the "moral transformation of man is the most important item on today's agenda of history", as Professor Sorokin of Harvard puts it: "Without moral transformation in altruistic directions neither new world wars and other catastrophes can be prevented nor a new—better and nobler – social order be built in the human universe".

Mankind can only be saved from destruction by replacing the values of industrial technology with those of humanity, of cooperation, of love. Ashley Montagu sums up the position tersely: "If civilisation is to survive we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together in the same world

at peace".

THE PROCESS OF HUMANISATION

The basis of fellowship. The basic principle of fellowship or true human relations is respect for the individual human personality. Man is more than a blob of matter. He has the power to think and the faculty of free choice, and these differentiate him from the lower creation and set him apart as an object of respect for his fellow human beings. Carried through sincerely, respect for persons spells justice and fairplay and gradually becomes a process of unselfish creative love that includes a sense of true pity, seeks the good of others, wishes them well, fosters the increase of their happiness and is dedicated to the fulfilment of their destiny.

This implies impartial justice, to give every man his due and not to ignore him but to see him as a person, an equal with real demands on us. The implications are many. As Gabriel Marcel put it: "To be a man is not only to have the biological characteristics of a certain species. It means to live crushed by the weight of care, in which a consciousness can be developed, which is conscious not only of oneself but of others. But these conditions touch upon the fulfilment of basic needs, housing, food, clothing, shelter, etc. In a word, *social justice* too with all its implications is part and parcel of the basic principle of respect for persons.

From justice to love. It is not enough to have a correct attitude of mind. The heart too must be committed. "As love without esteem is volatile and capricious, esteem without love is languid and cold". There must be sympathy for suffering man, a sense of empathy, i.e., putting oneself in the other fellow's shoes; and this social consciousness has many facets. It is not confined to a fair and equitable distribution of the world's resources to all who are called by the name of man; that no doubt must be given high priority on the agenda of today's world. It goes further.

What Confucius deplored in the filial piety of his day bears repetition here. He said: "The filial piety of the present day merely means to feed one's parents; but even one's dogs and horses receive their food. Without *reverence* wherein lies the

difference"? Now reverence is a component of love and is proper to the conception of the importance of human beings as persons.

Usually when people think of love, it means for them a warm feeling which desires some sort of intimacy with the one loved. As long as this feeling continues they cherish and help the loved one; if not they cheerfully give up doing so. That is not true love but a form of selfish, possessive self-satisfaction. Such people are really only living themselves. The love which stems from genuine respect for others is stable and lasting; but it is not necessarily a matter of feelings, of others; it is an energy of the rational will which shows itself indeeds.

The self and others. It is natural to man to seek his own happiness; it is fundamental that he has respect for others. Human relations mean the reconciliation of those two apparently conflicting claims in such wise that both receive their due attention. If, as sometimes happens, men treat others as though they were obstacles to be overcome or as instruments to be used for their own selfish purpose, one reason doubtless is the structure of a society in which human life has been reduced to a competitive struggle for existence.

As a modern writer has put it: "The motives of human beings everywhere are human, not economic. They are made to become economic only in societies in which 'money-theism' is the prevailing religion." There must be a change of front; economics as a dominant motive must give place to humanity; society to community and competition to co-operation. "Man is born for co-operation, not for competition or conflict". The essence of human relations is the principle of love which embraces all mankind. Humanization is a process of love which has infinite horizons.

True altruism. True altruism may be directed to the relief of misery or the increase of happiness. It may go further and concern itself with the realization of values. In the first case the goal is the good of others but not necessarily their goodness; in the second one is less concerned with giving them satisfaction than with their intrinsic worth and dignity and the development of their personalities in terms of a full human life and destiny.

Concern for the happiness of others is what motivates most

of the social service that is being done in the world today. Men and nations are becoming increasingly convinced of their duty of mutual help and sympathy. Large groups in each continent and countries themselves are extending a helping hand to other countries: international movements are pledged to raise the standards of living; the wealth of the world is beginning, only beginning however, to be shared by a wider circle of humanity. This effort is a healthy sign, mixed up no doubt with a host of wrong attitudes; it is doubtless a move in the right direction. But let us honestly ask ourselves: is its underlying philosophy and well meaning action the best that can be done in the matter? Even if there are no strings attached, no ulterior purpose in such approaches, is there not a touch of condescension and patronage in treating others just as "patient beneficiaries"?

Writing about the African scene, a columnist of the *London Times* illustrates the point. "The question of whether land is fairly apportioned or wages are equitable is largely secondary. The fundamental trouble is that the African does not feel himself part and parcel of the system even though it produces benefits for him. This is the crux of the matter".

Society is not and should not be regarded as something passive like a plot of ground in which values and benefits are to be made to blossom by the skill of more or less devoted "professional gardeners". So also, familiarity with misery and the vices it engenders must not dry up little by little the well-springs of the heart so that benevolence becomes impersonal and stereotyped and a poor man is only a "case" to be given a meal or a night's lodging.

Human relations at its best. Every human being has intrinsic worth in himself. Every human life has a purpose and destiny to be achieved. Man's standard of living must be such at least as to allow for a constant lifting of his "standard of life", of the quality of his life. People not only have a natural interest in their own happiness, but they also have an interest in values and in the meaning of life and its purpose, and it is this interest both in us and in others that must receive priority and the maximum attention in all efforts for true and full fellowship. The sense of belonging with which human relations must be invested is a sense of equality and brotherhood based on

our common humanity, our common origin and our common destiny. The peak of fellowship is reached in a communion of friends and brothers working as co-agents in a common enterprise of building a more just, more humane and more peaceful world. The words of an unknown author round this off most appropriately:

I sought my God, my God I could not see;
I sought my soul but my soul eluded me;
I sought my brother and found all three.

AN ASIAN BREAKTHROUGH: MEDITATION AND INTEGRAL HUMANISM

To correlate the quest for inner tranquility with the process of humanization just described, to help men and nations to trust rather than to mistrust, to open out to others rather than to construct protective cocoons—would it not be a worthy initiative on our part to organise Spiritual Institutes for the purpose, to be able to "leave the surface and without leaving the world plunge into the divine" and return very much the better for it? The Institutes or Sessions would have to be multi-religious of course, designed and geared, not for discussion and argumentation, much less for speechifying, but for personal reflection and prayer on agreed human issues, on the basic convictions shared by all living faiths, e.g., the equality and dignity of all human beings, the sacredness of the individual person and his conscience, the fundamental unity of the human family, etc. A short such list was included in the Kyoto Declaration and could do for a start. Half a day or even more could occasionally be arranged as a measure of spiritual renewal when circumstances warrant it; that would launch a real movement that could lead to a chain reaction across the globe.

Initially some WCRP Centre or group could do this in a small way, on an *ad hoc* basis; let us say on the occasion of meetings. The idea would be to spend about 8 or 9 minutes meditatively with greater participation and effect than is possible with the current practice of being present at some ritual or prayer service proformed by one or other religious tradition.

The appropriate atmosphere having been created by the setting, namely relaxed posture, rhythmic breathing, etc., two

or three minutes are spent in complete silence. (Each is on his own at this stage). Thereafter a sentence or two from one of the Scriptures, or a proverb or aphorism, all "neutral" but deeply religious, is read; e.g.: "The fragrance of one plum flower permeated 3,000 worlds." This lasts only a minute. A pause follows roughly of sixty seconds and then a one or at most two-minute comment from the reader is in order. Finally two to three minutes of meditation.

Depending on each one's tradition and upbringing, the period of silence could include "intercessory prayers" for each other and to seek the guidance and counsel of the Lord on the deliberations that are to follow. These of course will continue to be thoroughly prepared so that we do not run the risk of being irrelevant.

It is of the essence that we be seized of the processes of change and the current aspirations, efforts and hopes of our peoples, as we search to bring in the religious dimension as a necessary factor for full human development, at all levels and for all men.

Hopefully, the experience will prompt us to think of associating with the corporate worship patterns of our own religious persuasion, where there exist, the concerns of justice and peace.

In solidarity with all mankind, one common prayer theme suitable for each and all of us is that of repentance for current behaviour and practices, especially as they affect the weakest sections of society. Individual behaviour still matters also in international relations.

The process, if engaged in regularly, will step up our capacity to "care" more, which is the quality that gives life its deepest significance. Leading to the "liberation" of the rich from the dragging down influences, of a consumerist society, the will to work for the liberation of the oppressed will likewise be reinforced. The person who is standing firm in the Lord is the person whose heart is turned towards his fellow men in justice and charity. Concern for human welfare—true humanism, if you like—ultimately stems from the deeper reality of our relationship with God, our common Father who loves each and every person and shares with us his own strength and energy to do in like manner. No wonder Dostoievsky could

write:

> Seeing the sins of men one sometimes wonders whether one should react to them by force or by humble love. If it is carried through, the whole world can be conquered. Humble love is the most effective force, the most terrific, the most powerful, unequalled by any other force in the world.

Index

Bernal, J.D., 7
Commoner, Barry, 23
Coomaraswamy, A., 23
Corea, Gamani, 48
Day, Cedric, 72
Development, 3, 4, 21, 77; and industrialization, 169; international, 22, 36; and poverty, 76-77; and role of Church, 67-100; and self-reliance, 49-50; theological reflection on, 80, 81, 100-108
Dialogue, 43; interreligious, 43
Disarmament, 3, 53; and arms race, 22, 23, 54
Environment, 23-24, 39; and energy crisis, 24-25; and pollution, 1; and Stockholm Conference, 23, 59, 108; and technology, 32
Family, attitudes to, 127; and community, 132-133; Family life education, 129; Family life movements, 129-131; new challenges to, 126-127, 129; preparation for, 127-128; and service, 134; role of, 124-135
Food and Agriculture Organisation, 79
Freedom, 1, 4, 7, 31, 54
Gandhi, M.K., 31, 51, 105
Health, as wholeness, 120-122; community health care, 114 117; concept of, 118-120; inequitable distribution of, 111-114; people-oriented, 118; and social justice, 109-124
Hesburgh, T., 105
Human Rights, 3, 6, 14, 15, 26, 51; and peace, 13; and religion; 52; source of, 51
Humanism, 15; in Asia, 136-137; integral, 15-16, 136-146; and justice, 138-139; and meditation, 144-146; new, 74; and peace, 139-140
Hurst, Leonard, 67
Growth, human, 11-12, 26
Injustice, 7, 9, 24
Johnson, William, 45
Justice, 35, 49; and health, 109-124; international, 49, 68; social, 47, 78
Merton, Thomas, 24
Myrdal, Gunnar, 68
Narayan, Jayaprakash, 35
New International Economic Order, 39, 55-66, 137

Peace, 1, 9, 13, 28, 29; as wholeness of life, 13, 31; and education, 29; and human solidarity, 28, 29, strategies for, 18-20
Population and development, 100-108; and World Population Conference, 102, 106
Racism, 7, 9
Religion and development, 67-106; and dialogue, 2, 40; and international economic order, 55-66; and life, 7-9, 12, 26; and moral concern, 27-28; and quality of life, 21-34; role of, 2, 13, 16-17, 25-26, 103-104; social responsibility, 3, 9, 26; and world community, 4, 28, 30, 35-54, 61, 79
Schumacher, C.F., 44
Solzhenitsyn, Alexander, 31
Strong, Maurice, 108
Technology, social function of, 32-34
Toynbee, A., 10, 44
Transnational Corporations, 39
United Nations, 21, 34, 57, 64, 72, 74
United Nations Conference for Trade and Development, (Unctad), 22, 48, 57
Whyte, L.L., 23
World Conference of Religion for Peace (WCRP), 3, 4, 39, 42, 43, 46, 54, 138; Louvain meeting, 36, 42; Kyoto meeting, 3, 35, 42, 44; and United Nations, 3
World Council of Churches (WCC), 72
World Employment Conference, 50
World Food Conference, 21
World Food Plan, 34
World Population Conference, 102, 106

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In the perspective of Peace defined as a movement towards a 'life of fraternity built on truth and freedom, on justice and love', this book outlines the important role religion has to play in the world today. The author shows how the major religions of the world have to accept responsibility for the dominant problems of the contemporary world—human rights, poverty, disarmament, racial and religious intolerance, and social, economic and political exploitation. Religion can no longer be concerned merely with personal salvation but, through dialogue and action, must promote the growth of human solidarity for the emergence of a new world community based on peace and justice for all.

Angelo Fernandes is Archbishop of Delhi and has been President of the World Conference on Religion and Peace since 1970.

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